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[ADRIEN LEROY'S GUEST.]

## ADRIEN LEROY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"Maurice Durant," "Fickle Fortune," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER III.

Oh, life, thou art a galling load,  
Along a rough, a weary road,  
To wretches such as I.

Burns.

ADRIEN LEROY paused to light a cigar, then, buttoning his opera cloak across his broad chest, descended the stairs.

The footman, with a gesture of respect that almost amounted to a bow, preceded and opened the door for him.

With that grand, reposeful hauteur upon his magnificent face the idol of fashion passed into the street.

His cab had gone to the stables; the night was bitterly cold, and he thrust his hands deeply into his pockets, bent his head slightly against the biting wind, and started at a quick, swinging stride for his chambers.

"A wild night," he thought, looking up at the gas-light flickering in one of the street lamps. "A cruel night for many a one. Thank Heaven, it has cleared the street."

Even as the words left his lips his half-dreaming, half-mournful eyes rested upon a something leaning in the shadow of a house porch—its shrinking figure shrouded in an old shawl, its face hidden in its hands.

Adrien Leroy stopped and turned to look at it with that gentle earnestness which the women of his set found so irresistible, and, turning from his path, strode up the steps to where the girl crouched.

She heard his step, and lifted her face from her hands.

Expecting to see the usual face, terrible in its mockery of gaiety and heartrending in its earnestness of woe, Adrien Leroy felt a sudden shock of surprise—pleasurable surprise.

The face was that of a girl of about seventeen, perfectly oval, dark—almost olive, with large, full

eyes, defiant but beautiful, and a mouth that but for a curious hardness in the curve, might have been charming—a beautiful face, and, what was more, a fresh one.

His raised his hat slightly—the Leroy fashion when talking to woman, dairymaid or countess—and, dropping his handsome head, said, quietly:

"My girl, this is late and a wild night for you to be out. Are you not cold?"

She stared at him, her eyes wonderingly but leisurely resting, first upon his face with the deep, gentle eyes, then upon the diamonds at his wrist, and then back to his face again.

He repeated the question, and touched the hand—a long, well-shaped one, though blue with the cold—that was nearest him.

"You are cold, are you not, child?"

"Very," she opened her lips to answer, in a low but firm voice, her eyes still fixed with admiring surprise upon his face.

"I thought so," he said, straightening himself and speaking with marvellous tenderness. "Where do you live? Where is your home?"

"Cracknell Court," she replied, and let her eyes drop to his hand, which was already feeling for his purse.

"Soho?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Have you no father?"

"No," she said, in exactly the same tone—one of patient resignation that was almost defiant in its low firmness.

"No mother?"

"No," she said. "Only Johann Wilfer."

Something, accent or expression, in the reply struck Adrien Leroy and he scrutinized her dark face for a moment in silence.

"Are you English, my child?" he asked.

"English?" she repeated. "I suppose so. Nobody said I wasn't English? I suppose so. You are English, aren't you?"

He nodded.

"Yes, too English to let you perish in the cold

my child," he murmured, inaudibly to her, and looking down, thoughtfully. It was his intention to help her, but how?

"Why have you left your home?" he asked.

"Johann came home drunk and beat me, and I came out."

She dropped the flimsy shawl and held up one arm.

Underneath it there were three large bruises, showing up cruelly distinct upon the white skin.

The aristocrat's eye flashed angrily while he wondered at the firmness of the arm.

"Beat you, did he?" he said. "And not your father? Whom else do you live with? Have you no one to protect you?"

"There's Martha; but she's deaf. It's very cold."

"Cruelly for you," he said, curtly but not unkindly. "See, there is some money for you, but that will not warm you—"

She interrupted him with a laugh that was solemnly ironical, and put back his hand with her small icy one.

"Johann 'll get it," she said, drawing her shawl round her. "Johann gets everything."

"Excepting the blows," thought the aristocrat, dropping the sovereign into his pocket and unbuttoning his coat.

"You will not go home," he said, "if I take you?"

She shook her head, and in doing so released a shower of dark chestnut hair from the dingy shawl.

"No," she said, "not till morning. I shall be all right then. Not till morning."

"Before then you will be dead with the cold," he thought, taking her hand and looking up and down the street in indecision.

She seemed to have heard his thoughts.

"I wish I was dead," she said, quietly, and with a sharp, harsh laugh that jarred upon the refined senses of the man of fashion, coming from such well-shaped lips and backed by the bitter mockery of such deep, childlike eyes.

The sentence decided him, however.

"I cannot leave you here, my girl," he said

"Money is of no use to you. Will you come with me?"

He took off his coat as he spoke, and buttoned it round her light, supple form.

She submitted passively, but looked with wondering amazement at the rich black clothes and white shirt-front.

He held out his hand, and without a word she laid her own cold one within it, and the two descended the steps. They proceeded in silence for the length of two large squares, and then the girl stopped suddenly, wrenched her hand from his and commenced unbuttoning the coat.

He looked down at her with calm attention.

"What are you going to do?"

In answer she struggled out of the coat, and with a flush on her face and a bright light in her eyes held it up to him.

"I won't have it," she said through her pale lips, "you'll be cold."

Adrien Leroy smiled and quietly wrapped her in it again.

She stopped with a stubborn look.

"I won't come," she said, "you'll be frozen. I am used to cold; you're not. I won't wear it."

"Keep it on, my girl," he said, in the low tones of command which none ever disobeyed, "I am stronger and older than you, and a man. I am not cold."

She hesitated a moment, but the tone and the smile were irresistible, and, reluctantly returning her hand to his grasp, she walked on beside him with a light, springy step that, owing to her badly-shod feet was a noiseless one.

Adrien Leroy kept her walking as quickly as he could, for the cold was growing intense, and he could feel that her little hand within his own was growing cramped.

But she was tired as well as half-frozen, and, glancing at her uncertain steps, he stooped and took her in his arms.

"We are nearly there," he said, smiling to reassure her. "You are as light as a feather child (lighter than friend Johann's hand). We shall soon be in a warm room."

There she lay in his arms, her head against his spotless-shirt-front, with the three priceless pearls. She seemed perfectly content, perfectly assured, and nodded with a trusting closure of the dark eyes.

Adrien Leroy was strong, and as he had said the child's weight was but as a feather to his sinewy arms and broad chest. He hurried on quickly, with long strides, but his face was very earnest and very thoughtful.

"Where can I take her?" he asked himself. His steps were bent for his chambers, and he could see the mansion in which they stood rising in the street before him. "She is an innocent child. Can I take her to my chambers without injuring her poor shred of reputation? Yet what else can I do: no houses open, Johann of the strong arm drunk and expecting his victim at home in Soho? In she must come with me, poor child."

Of course it never occurred to him to retrace his steps and deliver her to the charge of Miss Haidée. That would have been committing a greater cruelty than to have left her to freeze in the stucco portion of the house in the square.

Within a hundred yards of his chambers he stopped short.

One other refuge remained; the refuge for the homeless and helpless. He turned down the street at whose corner he had passed, and rang the bell of the great prison house of the poor.

An official, frocked and braided like a turnkey, drew the rusty bolts and struck back a wicket.

"Well?" he said, curtly. "What's up?"

"I want you to take this poor child in for the night," said Adrien, quietly. "I found her on a doorstep in Colman Square."

The man looked hard, first at the aristocratic face of the bearer, then at the dark one of the burden.

"Come now, that won't do," he said, half angrily, and half with amusement. "It's rather late to play jokes of this sort. Take the girl home."

Adrien turned without another word, and the man, laughing grimly, flung to the wicket.

Opening the door of one of the large mansions Adrien entered the hall and turned up the lamp.

Then, with the girl still in his arms, he walked up the stairs, pushed open a door on the first floor, and entered a room.

A low light was burning, held by a statuette of white marble, placed in a recess lined with pink satin. Adrien turned up the light and set the girl down on her feet.

"Home at last," he said, with a smile, "and now come to the fire."

But the girl seemed turned to stone with astonishment, and there was for her almost sufficient excuse.

No fortunate mortal dropping into the fairy palace

of King Goldenlove in a Christmas pantomime could be more overwhelmed by the magnificence of his new quarters than this half-frozen gipsy street waif was at the four walls around her and the luxuries they contained.

Her large eyes wandered round from the velvet-draped walls with their glistening ancient and modern gems—all small, as gems should be—to the gold and delicately inlaid furniture, to the exquisitely rosetted statuette standing clean and clearly against the rich colour of the hangings, to the cunningly-out Venetian glass, to the thousand and one wonderful contents of the superb apartment, and thence to that most beautiful of all, the face of its owner.

He smiled with faint amusement at her evident amazed admiration, and, drawing a chair up to the fire that burnt brightly in the grate of polished steel and ormolu, surmounted and surrounded by its mantel that was a marvel even in its birthplace, Florence said:

"Come and warm yourself."

With her eyes wandering again she trod delicately over the thick Turkey-piled carpet and dropped with a sigh into the chair.

"Give me your hands," he said, bending over her and rubbing her blue hands. "Don't hold them near the fire yet."

He had seen the monks of St. Bernard chasing a rascled wanderer and knew the danger of too sudden and fierce heat.

"That is better. They are warm now, are they not? And now we will have some supper."

He turned from the fire and touched with his forefinger a flaming ruby that burned and flashed on the forehead of a marble Juno standing with a candelabra in her grasp.

No sound was heard, but in a few minutes the door opened noiselessly, and a thin, dignified man-servant stood in respectful attention.

"Let us have some supper, Norgate."

The slim gentleman in broad cloth made a profound bow, and disappeared as he had entered, and his master returned to the fireplace, leaning against the carved mantel and looking down at the handsome budding beauty of the girl below him.

As yet she had not spoken.

Her eyes, riveted on the man-servant while he had been in the room, now wandered like tropical fireflies, over the various splendours of the cabinet again.

Then suddenly she lifted them to the grave face above her and said, in a low, awe-struck whisper:

"Is this the Crystal Palace, if you please?"

Adrien Leroy, considerate of the child's feelings, suppressed the smile.

"The Crystal Palace?" he repeated. "No, my child. What makes you think so?"

"I've heard them say the Crystal Palace is the most beautiful place in the world and I thought this must be it. Oh, it's lovely! Is that chain there real gold?"

"No," he said, "only to the eye—no worse than a great deal of human furniture. No, not gold, but here comes something you require a great deal more than the precious metal even—supper!"

As he spoke Norgate, his man, entered, bearing a large silver tray.

Setting it on the table, he spread out a choice supper of hot made dishes, truffles, grilled bones, salmon of partridge, a carved fowl and various other delicacies which he had either prepared by the all-powerful aid of a magician's rod at the short notice, or been keeping warm on the chance of their being required.

Lifting the chairs to the table he disappeared again, returning shortly with wine and choice, delicately-out glasses.

These he set on the table, and, with the same respectful inclination of the head, announced that supper was served.

His master dismissed him with a nod, thinking that the girl would be less embarrassed if alone with him, and Norgate retired with the same expressionless face as if the apparition of cold and ill-clothed girls in the dainty apartment were of nightly occurrence.

Adrien brought a plate of the salmi and placed it on a low table before the girl.

"You are warm there," he said, "and comfortable, I hope. And now I wonder which wine you would prefer, Johannisberg, Chateau St. Emillion, Vaumagnon. There," and he poured out a glass of Burgundy.

"If you do not like it we can try another."

The great dark eyes stared at him, and they grew less perplexed but more child-like and gentle. The long, thin, well-formed hands took up the knife and fork.

Adrien Leroy seated himself at the table, with his eyes carefully directed from her, and pretended to set about a hearty supper to give her courage. By dint of helping himself to several dishes, and making a little fuss with his knife and fork, he gave her confidence, and presently glancing round he saw that she had commenced upon the salmi.

After a while she ate more boldly, stealing a glance at him and the rooms at intervals—a glance timid, wondering, and with some other expression that was as yet not quite distinct enough to designate.

He rose after a while, filled her glass, and helped her to another dainty. She ate a little, then laid down her knife and fork, and fixed her eyes on the fire.

"Enough?" he said, taking her plate, and stroking her hair back, his hand gleaming like marble against her dark braids. "Are you warmer now, and happier?"

She looked at him thoughtfully.

"I must be dreaming," she said, and her eyes filled with tears. "But I never dreamt of such a beautiful place before. Do you often bring people out of the cold into this lovely place?"

His face looked grave.

"Not often," he said, curiously. "Not as often as I should, my child. You have not told me your name yet; what is it?"

"Reah," she said.

"Reah!" he repeated. "You are Spanish?"

She did not understand him, and shook her head.

"No father or mother, and only friend Johann, whom you would be better without. Poor child! And what does Johann do for a living?"

She shook her head.

"I don't know. He gets drunk."

"A liberal profession, and one with many eminent members. And so there are many cold nights and hungry days for poor Reah," and he sighed.

She looked up at him with lowered eyebrows and tremulous lips.

"Must I go now? I am so happy." The lips trembled more markedly. "Nobody ever spoke so kindly to me as you do, nor ever gave me such nice things to eat. I don't know why you did it. Must I go now?"

She rose as she spoke, and stood humbly but eagerly hanging on his reply.

He put out his hand and led her to the chair again.

"No, Reah, not yet. You shall wait here until the morning—till the daylight, it's morning now—and then we will send you back, and see if we can do anything towards softening the rugged road for the future. Poor child!"

She did not understand half his words, but a babe could have comprehended the gentleness of his smile and the tenderness of the action with which he placed a silken embroidered pillow at her head, and a silver flagstone footstool at her feet.

She laughed up at him with thoughtful, child-like eyes until they filled with tears. He seemed to her a creature natural to another world—a higher world she had scarcely dared to dream of—visiting her troubled and weary portion of the world terrestrial to overwhelm her with his beauty and his gentleness.

Her heart beat fast, her lips were set firmly, but her eyes were eloquent.

Adrien Leroy stood with his wine-glass in his hand, leaning against the mantel, his eyes fixed on the fire, his face dreamily grave.

The falling of her arm on her lap roused him.

"A beautiful child, with a promise of a more beautiful woman," he thought, looking at her. "Poor little thing, how weary she is already! Poor and rich, young and old, how soon the world's poison reaches us! She sleeps like a fawn. Reah, a Spanish name, and there is a Castilian olive on her cheeks. Poor child!"

Then he took his coat and hat, lit a cigar, and prepared to face the cold again.

"A cruel kindness to give her food and steal her reputation," he murmured.

And so, with a chivalry that would have excited the wonder if not the mirth of the gay world in which he reigned monarch, Adrien Leroy passed into the wind, and paced the cold streets to keep the breath of scandal from a little street waif.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Pleasures are like poppies spread,

You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;

Or like the snowfall on the river,

A moment while, then melts for ever.

BURNS.

WHEN the sun rose, cold, bright and clear, Adrien Leroy retraced his steps through the neighbouring square, and returned to his chambers.

The elegant cabinet was empty. He looked round, even flung the curtain which veiled the door of the adjoining room aside, but the bird had flown.

He summoned his man Norgate by means of the satyr's ruby, and asked him where the child had gone.

With a shadow of surprise, the well-trained servant replied that he was ignorant of her disappearance.

"I left her here, sir, asleep, when I removed the supper things. She must have passed out on tip-toes."

Adrien nodded with calm weariness, and the man,



Adrien Leroy turned the heap of envelopes over with his hand, smiled significantly with no abatement of weariness at the many daintily-shaped, scented ones, and then passed into the next room.

Exquisitely decorated and furnished as the other, but in a softer, less brilliant style, it served as a dressing-room to the bedchamber beyond. A bath of cold water, deep and sparkling in the rays of the sun pouring through the jealousies, stood in a recess. Adrien Leroy divested himself of his evening-dress and plunged in.

A cold bath on a crisp winter morning is an excellent substitute for sleep, and when the man of pleasure re-entered the cabinet an hour after, attired in a dressing-robe of violet velvet, his noble face looked fresh, unfaded and reposeful.

Breakfast—chocolate, devilled kidneys, poached eggs, truffles and a Perigord-pie, with the usual accompaniments of elixir, Chateau Haut Brion vintage, coffee, and toast—was on the table with covers for four.

As he entered Norgate was placing the bell-shaped Moselle glasses upon the table.

"Covers for four, who breakfasts here?" asked the host, from whose mind the invitations and guests had entirely departed.

"Le Duc d'Olivier, Lord Standon and Mr. Paxhorn, sir."

"Oh, ay—I had forgotten, or rather I thought it was to-morrow. You will not forget the glass of ale for the duke?"

"It is here, sir," said the ever-attentive Norgate, motioning to a bottle of Bass on a side table. "Also Mr. Paxhorn's Madeira."

Adrien Leroy nodded, and, with one foot on the chased fender, idly opened his letters.

"Where do I dine to-night?"

"At the Marquis of Heathcote's, sir."

"At eight?"

"Nine, sir. Shall I put out the diamond set, sir?"

"No, no jewellery," replied his master, absently.

"Order the new cob for two o'clock. With a snaffle, I want to see how he goes."

"I will, sir. I may mention, sir, that Perrier, the court tailor, called for his account for the costumes made for the Barnimster bal masqué."

"Refer him to Mr. Vermont."

"I have done so, sir, several times, but he persists in his request to see you personally. It is a matter of discount."

Adrien Leroy waved his hand with a gesture of impatience.

"Send him to Mr. Vermont—I know nothing either of his bill or his discount, nothing whatever." The discreet Norgate bowed low and retired.

Adrien Leroy continued reading his letters, his white hands carelessly extracting the enclosures from their envelopes and dropping them one by one, and often unread, into the flame before him.

A dash, clatter and rattle on the stones outside, the flinging open of the door, interrupted him, and he came forward to receive his guests.

"My dear Leroy, fresh as a daisy!" exclaimed the duke, shaking hands with the young leader of English fashion with emproisement.

"Leroy always is," said the marquis, a fair-haired scapegrace, who was gliding down the glaciers of life to the abyss of ruin with the most graceful goodtemper and light-heartedness. "Nothing upsets Leroy."

"Save a bad dinner," added Algernon Paxhorn, the latest literary lion and a fast friend, in more senses of the word than one, of Adrien and the members of his clique.

"We're punctual and so is Norgate," said the duke, as after the usual salutations the quartette took their places at the table.

"And how went the new comedy?"

"Consult the papers," laughed Adrien Leroy.

"And how goes the fair Haidée?"

"As fairly as so dark a beauty can go," retorted her owner.

"They tell me she suppressed herself the other night," said Paxhorn. "A magnificent tigress with diamonds for spots."

"Not her only blimeishes," laughed Adrien, carelessly. "But, duke, you have only just come from the read, what of the new steeple-chase? Does my King stand a chance?"

"A chance!" echoed all three.

"The odds are four to one on him—and few takers," added the duke.

The young marquis stopped with his cup in his hand.

"That was yesterday morning. I left after you and the money was being lifted. You can lay as many thousands on him as you like, Leroy, and they will be taken."

"Oh," said Adrien, nodding carelessly. "Something better in the field. I thought the roan was not to be touched."

"And I also," said the duke. "I can't understand it, the only new entry was a weedy, roughish-looking chestnut which a little Yorkshireman listed in the afternoon. 'Holdfast' they call him."

"He'll require more hustling than holding," laughingly commented Paxhorn.

The marquis finished his coffee.

"I'd tack the roan still for all the rough chestnuts in the world, Ad, there's nothing can touch him."

"So Jasper Vermont says," remarked Adrien, "and he should know."

"He's a good judge of a horse," admitted the duke, who hated him, "a good judge of a horse and a man too; but I don't like him."

"A pleasant fellow too; always ready with a jest and a story, and you enjoy that, duke."

The Frenchman nodded and twirled his waxed moustache.

"True, when the jest and the story are told con amore, but Jasper Vermont's always fetches its price. That man never opens his mouth but with a purpose."

"That he may close it again," laughed Paxhorn.

Adrien Leroy's face darkened the slightest in the world. Jasper Vermont was his friend and an ill word of him he reckoned almost as a disparagement of himself.

"You misjudge him, duke," he said.

"Possibly," said the duke, courteously. "I cannot see what you find so engaging in him. But, putting Mr. Vermont aside, there can be no two opinions respecting the rissoles. Sartari is a possession I positively envy you. There is not another chef in England who understands breakfasts as he does."

"None," echoed the marquis. "If for nothing else, Adrien will gain immortality through his cook. By the way, have you heard of the viscount's misfortune? He nearly lost Girardot. The poor viscount was in despair when the genius gave him notice."

"Why did he want to go? Was the salary insufficient? Were not Monsieur Girardot's apartments to his liking? Could he not alter any of the kitchen arrangements to his fancy?"

"No; the salary was large, the great genius admitted, the apartment, the brougham, the kitchen were excellent; but Monsieur Girardot's feelings—sensitive as became a genius—would not permit him to dress liver and bacon, a dish of which the viscount is particularly fond. What was to be done? Liver and bacon or Girardot? The viscount chose the cook and the dish will never more grace the Bonchester table."

"Poor viscount!" exclaimed Paxhorn, after the laughter had subsided. "It reminds me—but, there, anecdotes are too heavy for breakfast, and spoil this Haut Brion. What wine you have, Adrien, nectar of the gods!"

"This is from the emperor's cellar," said Adrien, quietly. "We bought the whole of it, did we not, Norgate?"

"The whole, sir," replied the valet, refilling the great author's glass.

"Oh, give me your divine malt!" exclaimed the duke. "I have no palate for the blood of the vine. Here," as Norgate opened the bottle with a pop and poured the amber liquid into the long, slender glass which the duke held, "here is strength, vivacity, sparkle. It is wit and wisdom condensed. Ah!" and with a long breath he set the glass down emptied.

The marquis laughed.

"Wine, weeds, and women" are reversed with you, duke. "Bass, briar, and Baltic" is your motto."

This raised a laugh, in which the duke, who owned a yacht and was as devoted to cut avandish as he was to bottled ale, joined heartily.

Jest followed jest, the laughter grew more frequent.

Norgate, when the repast was disposed of, cleared away the remains with the noiseless rapidity of a genii. A card-table of ormolu, inlaid with ebony and mother-of-pearl, was opened, and the four were soon deep in lansquenets.

Adrien Leroy was fond of gambling, liking it for the excitement only. The money was its least inducement. He never cared, seldom knew, if he lost or won; the game over all interest had vanished and the results were matter of indifference to him.

This morning, cheered and exhilarated by the rare wine, they played high. Leroy and the duke lost heavily as stakes go, a matter of a thousand pounds, but Adrien Leroy tossed the notes, which he took from a small drawer in the table, unlocked and unprotected, with a light laugh and a careless smile.

"A close run, duke; had they played the knave we should have won. Another hand?"

"No," laughed the duke, glancing at the timepiece, upheld by a bronze figure of the inexorable Father. "No, I have broken faith with Lady Merivale by half an hour."

"What is it—picture galleries, duke?" laughed the marquis.

"Yes," replied the duke, "I promised her ladyship to escort her and three other charming maid-moelles to the winter exhibition."

"Ah," laughed Paxhorn, "I see the grim shade of matrimony hovering over your head. Beware!" The duke rose with a shrug of the shoulders and a good-natured laugh.

"Thanks, Pax, I'll remember, be where I will."

"Atrocious!" exclaimed Adrien, shaking hands and pointing to the cigar box. "Leave me with a light in your mouth, if you haven't it in your head, Standon."

When they had gone the host stood looking at the empty chairs absently.

"What next?"

Norgate answered the unspoken question by entering and announcing that the new cob was at the door. As he descended the stairs Mr. Jasper Vermont entered the hall.

"Ah, just in time," he said, with his amiable smile.

"Where is it—the Park or the Richmond Road?"

"Neither. I really don't know," said Adrien, shaking the smooth, fat hand of his homme d'affaires. "Have you seen the cob? What do you think of him?"

"Worthy even of the Leroy stables," replied Jasper, walking with the owner to the door and regarding the showy horse with head drooped aside.

"Capital. By the way, I have just left Haidée in tears. Poor girl; repentance followed close upon repletion. She vows and promises to abstain from pork chops and patchouli, and prays for the return of your smiles."

Leroy smiled rather gravely.

"What has Haidée done to gain so eloquent an advocate, Jas? Poor girl! Where's the need for pity? Pork chops are natural to such appetites. Enough of her, and all her kind; I am not fickle—in gifts, at least—whatever I may be in the matter of love. But, Jas, what of this rough chestnut they have entered for the steeplechase?"

Jasper Vermont dropped his thick white eyelids over his dark, restless, little eyes for a moment, then raised them with a laugh.

"Do you mean the screw entered yesterday, or the day before, by a Yorkshire man? Oh, he is all right, can't run the course, I should think, let alone the last rise. Nothing can touch the roan. I'm a poor man, as you know, sir, or I'd cover King Cole's back with guineas."

"Do it for me," said Leroy, with his careless laugh, and, passing down the steps, vaulted into the saddle.

"What! another thousand?" said Jasper, in a lower voice—almost an eager one.

"Two, if you like," said the princely owner, and with a wave of his hand as signal for the groom's release of the horse's head and adieu to Jasper, he trotted off.

Jasper Vermont looked after him with a smile, then, stroking the place where a moustache would have been a relief, passed up the stairs.

Entering the cabinet, he glanced at the cards and the wine-glasses with an evil look, that vanished or changed into the old smile as Norgate entered the room.

"Breakfast?" asked Mr. Vermont.

"Yes, sir. The duke, Marquis of Standon, and Mr. Paxhorn."

"Lansquenets, too," said Mr. Vermont.

"Yes, sir, and Mr. Adrien lost."

"That's quite an unnecessary addendum," said Mr. Vermont, putting his hat on with the pleasantest smile in the world. "Quite unnecessary, Mr. Adrien always does, Norgate, always does."

Meanwhile the victim of ill-luck rode through the quiet squares into the noise, bustle and confusion of Oxford Street.

"Soho, Cracknell Court? Yes, sir; first opening to your left," replied a man, of whom Adrien Leroy had asked direction, and the horse's head was turned towards the point indicated.

Cracknell Court was small, evil-smelling, and swarmed with children.

Throwing the reins to a post-lounger, the man of pleasure, to whom dust, noise, and evil smells were things carrying absolute pain, entered the den and asked for Mr. Johann Wilfer.

"There he is," said an urchin with the years of an infant and the wan, pale face of an old man.

Adrien Leroy turned to a man leaning against an open door, and touched his hat.

Kings, cardinals, and gentlemen of blue blood are sometimes very wicked, but they are always polite.

"Am I speaking to Mr. Johann Wilfer?" he said, quietly.

"You are," said the man, taking the begrimed pipe from his equally begrimed lips, and staring with blood-shot eyes at the handsome, highbred face and princely figure.

"Can you tell me if a young girl named Reah returned to you safely this morning?" he asked, fixing his deep, stern eyes upon the shifting bloodshot ones of the man.

"Reah, d'ye mean?" replied the man. "Ain't seen her for months. She ran away last June. An awful young thief. Stole my Sunday togs and her aunt's best bonnet. That's all I knows about her."

Adrien Leroy looked long and fixedly at him, then turned away.

As well expect to extract juice from a grindstone as the truth from one so expert in falsehood.

Mr. Johann Wilfer blinked his eyes like an owl, gave a little sigh of relief as the aristocrat released him from the piercing gaze, and stepped out on to the pavement to get a last view of him as he mounted the cob.

Then, with a leer at the sky, he stumbled up the rickety stairs into the first-floor room and confronting a girl who sat with her pretty head leaning against her hand, said, with a malevolent chuckle:

"So that's your game, is it? You're goin' in for swells right away, are yer, my gal? Got your name put as a poll parrot. 'Reah,' quite familiar and friendly. Knows all my private business, I dessey. I'll break every bone in yer body!"

He stumbled towards her where she stood transformed from dead indifference to vivid colour and light at the allusion to her benefactor and made a grab at her splendid hair.

But, alert and lithe as a leopardess, she stepped back and bounding across the table slipped past him and down the stairs, to the head of which he pursued her, looking over the banister and launching forth a long and rich volley of curses.

(To be continued.)

#### SPRING IS COMING.

THROUGH leafless boughs the rueful wind

Wails low his drear refrain;

And from the icy north the storm

Comes sweeping down amain.

But skies shall soften, and storms depart,

And buds shall swell, and verdure start,

And blossoms cover the plain, faint heart,

For spring is coming again.

The spring is coming again, good sooth,

And store of cheer she brings,

For icy glooms, the flash of sireams,

And the glint of glancing wings;

For the wintry day, the merry May;

For snow-wreaths, brings she garlands gay,

With many a rollicking roundelay,

And silvery carollings.

And if my spring-hopes should fade,

And promise fruit in vain;

Should wintry sorrows chill my heart,

And cloud my life with pain,

I will cheerily wait for a brighter day,

And trust that heaven will bring the May

That brighter and gladder forever and aye,

Shall never fade or wane.

T. S. P.

The old gravel pits and belts of furze on the west side of Tooting Common are being cleared away, and the land is to be excavated and laid out as a public park and recreation-ground for the inhabitants of Tooting and Streatham. The work is undertaken by the Board of Works.

**PRODUCTION OF WAX AND HONEY IN CORSICA.**—Corsica produces the largest quantity of wax of all countries in Europe, if not in the world. In ancient as well as medieval times, the inhabitants paid their taxes in wax, and supplied large quantities annually. Since wax is to honey as 1 to 15, the Corsicans must have gathered each year some millions of pounds of honey.

**EXTENSION OF THE MONEY ORDER TO PARIS.**—Money orders may be obtained at any money order office in the United Kingdom, payable at the General Post Office in Paris. Not exceeding 2*l.*, 9*s.*; above 2*l.* and not exceeding 5*l.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*; above 5*l.* and under 7*l.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*; above 7*l.* and under 10*l.*, 3*s.* No single money order will be issued for a higher sum than 10*l.* The issues of money orders in Paris are payable at money-order offices in this country.

**CITY COMPANIES.**—The Joiners', Carvers', and Cellars' Company offers various prizes for competition amongst the students of the schools of art within the metropolitan area. For building construction, one of 5*l.* 5*s.*, and a second of 3*l.* 3*s.*; for wood-carving, one of 5*l.* 5*s.*; for designs for carving, one of 3*l.* 3*s.*; and for designs for ceilings, frames, &c., one of 3*l.* 3*s.* The prizes are to be given in mathematical instruments, books, &c., to be selected by the successful competitors.

**THE LOLLARD TOWER.**—It is not generally known that the Bishop of Lichfield has taken up his residence in a wing of Lambeth Palace, which heretofore has been associated far more with historical memories of a painful character than with ideas of Episcopal

grandeur and luxury. It is, however, only fair to Dr. Selwyn to state that in becoming the first tenant which Lollards' Tower has had for many generations, he has done little more than make it habitable. No prelate has led a harder life than the ex-Bishop of New Zealand, and he was, therefore, not at all likely to fit up the old ecclesiastical prison in an ostentatious manner. The dungeon proper, the walls of which are covered with the names and inscriptions of its former inmates, is still uninhabited, and there is a separate entrance to the Tower from the Albert Embankment.

#### THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S MARRIAGE TREATY.

THE Treaty between the Queen and the Emperor of Russia for the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh with the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna has been presented to Parliament and printed. The Treaty, which consists of 21 Articles, was signed at St. Petersburg on the 22nd of January, 1874, and the ratifications were exchanged on the 29th of January. Article III. provides that the Duchess is not to be in any way hindered in the full, free, and unrestrained exercise of the religious profession of the Orthodox Church, but will nevertheless of her own free will accompany the Duke to chapels and churches of the Established Churches of England, and Scotland, and other Protestant churches and chapels at all times when it shall be fitting that she should assist at ceremonies and other public acts which may be held therein. Children born of the marriage are to be brought up as Protestants.

By Article V. the Emperor assigns to his daughter the usual marriage portion granted to Emperors' daughters of 1,000,000 roubles (about 150,000*l.*), which is to remain in Russia, and bear interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, which will be paid half-yearly to her Imperial Highness, who is to have the separate and exclusive enjoyment of it, and is to be at liberty to dispose of it by will. The Emperor also, "as a mark of his peculiar affection, and which is not to be considered as a precedent for the future," grants to the Duchess an annual sum of 75,000 roubles (11,250*l.*) for life, which her Royal Highness is also to be at liberty to dispose of according to her own free will and pleasure. The Emperor also assigns to his daughter a special marriage portion of 1,000,000 roubles (150,000*l.*), to be dealt with in the same manner as the ordinary marriage portion. Her Royal Highness retains possession of her private capital, amounting when the Treaty was signed to 600,000 roubles (90,000*l.*).

There is to be only one household for the Duke and Duchess, and her Imperial Highness is to be at liberty to make any contribution she may please to the expense of her joint establishment; but the debts and obligations of the Duke and Duchess are not to be common to both. If her Royal Highness should become a widow she is to have 6,000*l.* a year from the English revenues, and is to be at liberty to live in any country she pleases; and at her death, whether she die before or after the Duke, the marriage portions and interest and her private capital are to be appropriated for the benefit of her children.

In the event of her Royal Highness dying before her husband and leaving no children, the Duke is to have the enjoyment for life of the interest of the ordinary marriage portion of the Duchess, and at his death it is to revert to the Emperor of Russia. The special marriage portion would at once revert to the Emperor in the event of the Duchess dying before her husband, and without children. The only sum which would go absolutely to the Duke would be a sum of 250,500 roubles (37,500*l.*), which is to be taken out of the marriage portion mentioned in Article V., the interest on this sum being deducted from the interest on the marriage portion, which, as already stated, his Royal Highness is to receive during his life.

**SPANISH GIPSIES.**—It is impossible not to be struck by the originality and the cleverness of the gypsies even in their vices. A gipsy man was at confession one day, and whilst he was confessing, he spied in the pocket of the monk's habit a silver snuff-box, and stole it. "Father," he said, immediately, "I accuse myself of having stolen a silver snuff-box." "Then, my son, you must certainly restore it." "Will you have it yourself, my father?" "I? Certainly not, my son!" "The fact is," proceeded the gipsy, "that I have offered it to its owner, and he has refused it." "Then you can keep it with a good conscience," answered the father.

The Duke of Brunswick, in his last will and testament, charged his executors to raise a monument to him at Geneva, and indicated that he wished it to be designed somewhat after the pattern of the Scaligers' monument at Verona. The poor executors are in great perplexity on this subject, for the Scaligers'

monument having been designed especially for the place in which it was erected, cannot be made to accord with the sites offered by the city of Geneva for this purpose. In this dilemma the executors have had recourse to the celebrated French architect, M. Viollet le Duc, who has undertaken to go to Geneva and deliver his verdict on the suitability of the proposed sites. M. Viollet le Duc is known in Switzerland by his effective restoration of the cathedral of Lausanne.

#### MAD DOG BITE.

CLOSE observation has shown that hydrophobia occurs as often in cold weather as in warm. The bites of other domestic animals, as cats and rats, occasion hydrophobia. Imagination, a highly nervous condition, has been followed by hydrophobic symptoms when no bite of any animal or insect has been remembered; hence the wisdom in all cases of bites for the person bitten to do all that is possible to dismiss the subject from the mind; and in case of a child or servant, or other uncultivated person, or any highly nervous person, common sense, philosophy and humanity alike dictate the course to be pursued toward the injured party. Never show any apprehension, exhibit no misgivings, never allude to the subject in any way; or, if it is brought up at any time, in mercy to the bitten one turn the conversation in some other direction. The greatest surgeon of the century, having directed his attention to the subject, ascertained that out of twenty persons bitten by dogs apparently mad only one suffered from hydrophobia.

Mad dogs foam at the mouth and bark severely, because they have been excessively irritated and alarmed. Any dog does the same. True hydrophobic dogs never do foam at the mouth, never do bark; and yet persons suffering from hydrophobia do imitate the barking of a dog, showing conclusively that they are labouring under a false impression as to facts; and in such cases the attack may be well considered as much nervous as a fit of hysterics. Such persons might be brought to by a warm bath, cold cloths; or, better still, bags or pads of pounded ice and salt kept applied to the whole head, while the entire body, in a room marking seventy degrees of Fahrenheit, should be immersed in water at ninety-five degrees and kept there until a soothing effect has been obtained, and repeat as often as needed. This is not given as a cure for real or bastard hydrophobia, but as an alleviation of the dreadful sufferings.

After all, what is the sign of a dog being mad, in a hydrophobic sense? Do they run and yelp as if a tin pan were following close after them? Not a bit of it. They are moody, quiet, restless, uneasy, paw the ear, and will snap at you if you don't let them alone—just as many people snap and snarl when they are not very well, or have the toothache. The very best treatment for a mad dog is precisely that which is the very best for a mad man—to one who has lost his temper and made a fool of himself—let him alone; or, which is more humane as to a dog, get him into a silent retired room, and, once or twice a day, slip in some water and meat. If in two or three days he does not come to know you, by wagging his tail when you call him by name, then it might be as well to destroy him by chloroforming him.

If a person has been bitten by a dog supposed to be mad—if a physician cannot be had promptly—suck the blood out of the wound vigorously for two or three minutes; if there is no sore or crack about the lips, tongue or mouth; then heat any piece of iron as sharp as the point of a goose quill until it is of a white heat and press it into the wound for half an inch or more, not keeping it in more than five seconds; this is called "cauterizing"—a method which can be made speedily available almost anywhere. If you have not a sharp piece of iron take a live coal of any kind and lay it on the wound, regardless of its greater size, for burning a wider surface will answer the purpose of a deeper one; let the live coal remain on ten seconds. The treatment, if promptly done, is believed by eminent men to be a certain and perfect preventive in all cases.—W. W. H.

**TALE-BEARERS.**—Look into families, and you will find some one false, paltry tale-bearer, who, by carrying stories one from another, shall inflame the minds and discompose the quiet of the whole family. And from families pass to villages or towns; and two or three pragmatical, intriguing, meddling fellows (men of business, some call them), by the venom of their tongues, shall set the whole neighbourhood together by the ears. Where men practice falsehood there will be perpetual suspicions, evil surmisings, doubts and jealousies, which, by sowing the minds of men, are the bane and pest of society; for society is built upon trust, and trust upon the confidence that men have of one another's integrity.





## JOSEPHINE BEAUVILLIERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
*"Lady Juliette's Secret," "The Rose of Kemdale,"*  
 etc., etc.

### CHAPTER VIII.

A gallant soldier and a peerless dame,  
 What marvel if his heart consumed in flame?  
 But she stood by, that fair and lovely maid,  
 Yet never look she cast nor word she said!  
Carleton Pride.

A MONTH had passed since that fatal first of January, but the excitement respecting the events of that fearful night had by no means died away. Desolation and death had been carried into too many homes throughout the length and breadth of the county; the voices of mourning and weeping were heard.

Grandmother Grant had entirely disappeared. Her old man and woman servant were alive and intact. They expressed no fear nor sorrow regarding the fate of their mistress. They said that if she had any executors they would doubtless come forward to say what was to be done with the remains of the property. They professed that they knew nothing of the matter whatever themselves; they did not know if their mistress had been burnt to death, or if she had escaped.

The room in which she had told fortunes was not destroyed. Whether she had rushed out and perished in the flames was unknown. Her body was not found.

This man and woman servant collected the plate, and sent it to the bank at Northwick St. John's. All the furniture that was unburnt was sold by auction, and the proceeds, amounting to some hundreds of pounds, were likewise placed in the bank, being credited to "Grandmother Grant," pending the arrival of executors.

Then the dismantled and half-burnt house was left as a refuge for the bats and owls. A greater portion of the beautiful conservatory had been destroyed by the flames; the staff of gardeners was withdrawn, and the old man and woman took their departure, having answered no questions, and leaving the mystery of Grandmother Grant as impenetrable as ever.

Rumours were rife, superstition shuddered and spun out such a story as made the flesh of the timid to creep and their blood to curdle with horror.

It was rumoured that Grandmother Grant was a veritable fiend from the bottomless pit, permitted by the prince of darkness to clothe herself in the form of an old enchantress, that she might work death and evil to the human species. She had given this ball

### [WEALTH AND POVERTY.]

under the guise of charity that she might lure men and women to their death.

Year by year the fame of these entertainments had grown, and, alas! on this fatal first of January the number of guests had swelled to three hundred, these, with servants, attendants and bandmen made up an aggregate of three hundred and forty souls. Out of these eighty-six had perished miserably, many more were crippled for life, and nearly every one who had been at the ball had reason to mourn the loss of some friend or relative.

The flames which had consumed these hapless victims were now popularly supposed to have been kindled by the incantations of diabolical Grandmother Grant. And it was supposed by many of the country folks that she had been seen floating out of the smoke and flames, bestriding a broomstick and chanting an unholy stave.

Life at the cottage by the canal side, meanwhile, was as dreary and dull in its drudgery as of yore.

Josephine still toiled, her stepmother still sneered, her father still complained.

It was one bitter night, the wind was howling furiously, fiercely driving the heaps of snow before its icy breath. It was a night when one would not have willingly turned a homeless dog from the three-hold of one's door, but Josephine was buttoning on her shabby little waterproof and fastening her thick veil before her face. It was nine o'clock at night that she was forced to go out, for her father could fancy nothing else than some thin slices cut from a very fine cold cooked ham, which he had seen that day in the window of the first confectioner's at Northwick St. John's, and since he had had no money in his purse, and was a stranger to the proprietor of the dainty establishment, he had not been able to ask him for credit, so there had been no help for it, but to return home and grumble all day, while Josephine cut her flowers. By the evening they would be finished. She must then take them to Doctor Dalby, who has ordered them.

Mrs. Dalby is going to give a party, and Josephine's artificial blossoms are to decorate the ball-room.

And now Josephine has to undergo the painful trial, the humiliating ordeal of asking for her money. "Papa wants the ham, the ham from that particular shop. He is an invalid, and his whims must be attended to. If he did not have that ham he would eat nothing for his supper, and then he would be ill, but with that ham between slices of nicely browned toast, and with a little of the finest brandy and cold water to drink, why, papa would sup like a prince."

So out goes Josephine into the bitter wind, and she holds her head down and paces along the streets, which are almost silent and deserted. Soon she is in St. Peter's Street, and making straight for the residence of Doctor Dalby. She mounts the steps, rings, is admitted, and is shown into the dining room, where Diana and her mother are busy before a great fire, seated by a large table and, sending out cards of invitation for their ball on the tenth instant. Diana was radiantly beautiful in her silk dress of a golden brown colour and a scarlet ribbon wound among her dark tresses.

"Oh, here is Miss Beauvilliers," she cried. "That's right, brought the flowers so punctually."

Diana did not offer to shake hands with Josephine, her haughty mother would have taken her severely to task had she done so, but she invited her to stand close to the fire; took her basket from her, and drew out the wreaths of flowers, uttering exclamations of delight at their beauty.

It would have formed a pretty picture that scene in the warm fire-light: Beautiful Diana, in her brilliant silk, her golden brooch and ear-rings set with carbuncles, her rich dark hair tied with crimson ribbons, and the beautiful Josephine, in her long cloak of sombre gray, her small bonnet of the same neutral tint, but all the glory and wealth of her golden hair crowning her like a diadem. Then the wreaths of flowers, the flickering fire-light, the handsome massive furniture in the doctor's dining room, and stately, self-possessed Mrs. Dalby sitting apart, looking massive and haughty as some dowager Duchess.

At this moment there came a ring to the front door bell; two minutes afterwards, and Captain Chatteris walked into the dining-room. Josephine flushed, then suddenly grew pale and stately. She bowed her head with graceful humility in answer to the captain's greeting, and then went on arranging her flowers. It was bitterness for her to think she had to make her demand for payment before this brilliant officer, who already exercised so strange an influence over her life. She went on arranging her flowers, and meanwhile Captain Chatteris was shaking hands with Diana, and talking to Mrs. Dalby.

"Why, we have only seen you twice," said Mrs. Dalby, "since that terrible night when it was supposed you were burnt to death."

"And all the while," cried Diana, "you were shut up in the little summer-house in the garden, the door was locked upon you, and although you kept beating at it, nobody heard you, for every one was occupied, and every one was likewise crying out."

"Poor Miss Woodville must have been insane

that night," observed Mrs. Dalby. "Her poor father was burnt to death you are aware. She was perfectly distracted, and did all sorts of extravagant things. She managed to get into the picture-gallery—how, nobody knows, for the place was all in a smother of smoke; and there, finding two young women endeavouring to escape by the ladders, for you, I believe, Captain Chatteris, had apprized those below of their danger, she inveigled one of them into a bed-room, and locked her in. Afterwards she escaped by the ladder herself."

"She seemed to have had a perfect mania for locking people up!" cried Diana; "for she inveigled you, Captain Chatteris, into the summer-house, telling you that a friend of yours was there, and then she turned the key on you!"

"And in the morning I was found," said Captain Chatteris, looking towards Josephine; "frozen nearly to death, and having roared myself hoarse. My good father and mother and sisters had gone home, all believing me safely burnt out of the way. I astonished them when I appeared at Merton Court, just about lunch time."

"You must feel wonderfully grateful to Miss Woodville, I should think, Captain Chatteris," observed Diana, saucily; "although to be sure her locking you up looked as if she wanted to take special care of you, and perhaps she did."

"Perhaps she did!" echoed the young officer, carelessly; "but I have no ambition to become acquainted with the motive of Miss Woodville. She is a lady who does not interest me in the slightest degree."

"And she has thirty thousand a year!" cried Diana, mockingly.

"If she had three hundred thousand, it would be the same to me," replied the captain, very coolly. "But now, Miss Dalby, I must apologise for my late visit. I happened to have been in town to-day, seeing a great billiard match come off at the 'Crown Hotel,' between some of our officers and the officers of the volunteer rifle corps; and as soon as it was over, I thought I would just run in and see how you were, and then ask you when I am to come in and assist at the decoration of this room of yours," and he glanced towards Josephine.

"Oh, to-morrow," cried Diana, "to-morrow will do admirably, and Miss Beauvilliers will be here to assist us. Will you not, Miss Beauvilliers?"

Josephine bowed acquiescence.

"I think, Miss Beauvilliers, we need not detain you any longer," cried Mrs. Dalby, with some asperity. Josephine troubled like a reed. If she went away without asking for her money, her papa must go without that delicate ham sandwich which he would relish so much for his supper. So, nerving herself by a strong effort, she said:

"Could I speak to you for one moment, Miss Dalby?"

"Certainly!" cried Diana, good temperedly. "Excuse me one moment, Captain Chatteris."

Then she led Josephine out of the room. Under the hail lamp she faltered out her story, and the kind-hearted Diana paid her the money, and wished her good-night. A few minutes more, and Josephine was pacing down the wintry street towards the confectioner's shop. A military tread came clanking behind her on the pavement—another moment and Captain Chatteris was by her side.

"Miss Beauvilliers, I have a most serious question to ask you," said the young officer.

#### CHAPTER IX.

As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
She in her poor attire was seen!  
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,  
One her dark hair and lonesome mien.

Tennyson.

JOSEPHINE started. Since the terrible first of January, she had met Captain Chatteris twice, but on neither occasions was she alone. Reports had reached her of his having been imprisoned in the summer-house by Miss Woodville, and she therefore understood how it was that he had not returned to her rescue. She had received the news of his safety with thankfulness, but she had scarcely hoped to enjoy a tête-à-tête with him again. There were rumours also that his regiment was about to be ordered from the neighbouring garrison town to foreign service, and if Captain Chatteris went to India, there was little probability that she should see him again for a long time. Certainly, if she held any slight place in his regard, she would have lost that frail tenure years before she saw his face again. Thus the fair flower-maker had schooled herself into what she considered to be a reasonable frame of mind. She was a little annoyed then at the officer's following her, and attempting to upset her calm and equanimity.

"What serious question have you to ask me

Captain Chatteris?" she said; for, after speaking to her thus, he had fallen into pace with her, and maintained silence for a short time.

"I wish to know," he answered, "whether your family is at all connected with that of the Woodvilles of Stoneleigh Priory?"

A thrill passed over Josephine, from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot. She received so much scorn at home from her stepmother on the subject of her connection with these great people that she never alluded to the subject and strove always to banish it from her thoughts.

That the subject had fascination for her it would be impossible to deny.

Her present life was one hard, and full of privations. Youth naturally claims happiness as its lawful heritage; while Josephine knew little save toil, dreary monotony, and repression. Insipid food, mostly tea and toast, rice pudding, or weak broth, formed her meals, and to these she could not always bring the sauce of appetite, for much of her employment was sedentary.

Young girls always like to dress well, and Josephine's clothes, though always perfectly neat, were cheap in material, and neutral in tint; for her taste was far too good to allow her to wear flaunting colours with shabby garments. But all this gray, staid life might possibly be changed, as by miracle, as by the waving of a fairy's wand, if only a certain marriage certificate could be found.

Then she might dwell in warm rooms richly carpeted; vases, books, and pictures might delight her eyes and elevate her soul.

Her father might enjoy all the luxuries which wealth could purchase, the little children might inhabit great warm nurseries, heaps of toys and picture books would throw them into ecstasies of delight, and she—she might wear fur and velvet, and hold up her fair head, not proudly, but with confidence, and the great gulf between her and Captain Chatteris would be spanned by a golden bridge.

Useless to deny but this fact of the lost certificate had a strange and powerful fascination for the young maker of flowers.

"I am connected with the Woodville family, Captain Chatteris," said Josephine, "but I never mention it."

"Why?" asked the captain, bluntly.

"Because by so doing I should only excite ridicule," replied the young girl.

By this time they stood opposite to the confectioner's shop. The lights were still burning, but the boy was putting up the shutters.

"Are you going in there?" asked the captain.

"Yes, to buy some ham for papa's supper."

"Miss Beauvilliers," said the captain, suddenly, "it is very cold, and I have no right to keep you standing in the street—besides all this, you are wanted at home. Do you think your father would be offended if I returned with you, took something for supper and supped with you? I have not seen him since I called once about some flowers, and I should like to explain to him personally how it is, or rather how it was, that I was so had a protector for you at Grandmother Grant's ball. And then, perhaps, he could tell me what I want to know, better than you can do. I am going to constitute myself your champion, Miss Beauvilliers, that is, I am going to try and find out this mystery of your connection with the Woodville family, and I am going to institute a strict search for the missing certificate."

"Papa will be delighted," cried Josephine, and then she felt inclined to withdraw her words, for she knew that nothing angered and annoyed her stepmother more than any allusion to the Woodville property, and Josephine's possible claims on it, and perhaps Mrs. Beauvilliers might make her father angry with her and with the captain also. But yet the pleasure of introducing her father to her aristocratic friend was so great that she resolved to run the risk.

"If you would be so kind as to come," she said, "Captain Chatteris, and to take us as we are, in our poor little cottage, I am sure papa would be glad to see you."

"Then I will come," said the captain. Forthwith he entered the shop, and while Josephine was paying for the ham, the wealthy young officer purchased two large pigeon pies, a cold pheasant, a tongue, quite an army of fine French rolls, a stone jar containing the most expensive country butter, all the grapes, oranges, and rich seed cakes that the shop contained, and several bottles of jellies and preserves.

"And now," said he, "I shall want a barrow and a boy to roll it along."

Both were obtained immediately, for the heir of Lord Romilly paid like a prince.

"And now," said Chatteris, "I must have a dozen of fine old port, and two bottles of French brandy. Those I shall order at the 'Crown Hotel' as we pass."

Josephine left the shop, and the captain offered her his arm. She shrank from accepting it.

"Are you afraid of me?" asked Captain Chatteris. "Not of you," returned Josephine, meekly; "only of what people may say."

"And as it is, are they not likely to say a great deal in a town like Northwick St. John's?" demanded the captain, laughing. "One should do one's duty honourably and honestly, and then laugh at the chatter of a country town. Now, it is your duty to take my arm, because the pavement is freezing afresh, and you will be very likely to fall and break your limbs unless you lean upon me."

So Josephine put her arm within that of the captain, and together they walked down the High Street of Northwick St. John's.

He left her for an instant at the door of the "Crown Hotel," while he ran in to order the dinner of port. A boy followed them with it to the white estuary by the canal. The captain knocked somewhat boldly at the little door. It was opened by Josephine's stepmother, who uttered an exclamation of surprise when she perceived Josephine with the stately Captain Chatteris and two boys, one carrying a hamper, and another standing outside with a loaded wheelbarrow. She threw up her hands.

"What does this mean?" she exclaimed.

Captain Chatteris, in his polished, manly voice, and with his graceful manner, came forward to apologise and to explain.

"I fear I shall be intruding, perhaps," he began, "if I beg for an hour's conversation with Mr. Beauvilliers at this late time of night. I have heard that he does not make a habit of retiring very early, and I venture to think when he hears the matter that I wish to discuss with him, he will pardon my eccentric conduct."

Mrs. Beauvilliers did not look amiable. It is needless to say that she was jealous of her stepdaughter, and naturally severe towards her. She was not pleased, then, at her appearing at ten o'clock at night, with her small hand resting within the arm of so great and gallant a gentleman as Edward Chatteris, Esquire, of Merton Court. Yet she scarcely liked to be rude to a customer, though that is rather a coarse and common-place word to use, taking into consideration Josephine's refinement and her father's pride. Still, Captain Chatteris was a customer for Josephine's paper-flowers to all intents and purposes, and he was one too who recommended her talent to a large circle of friends.

So Mrs. Beauvilliers invited him to enter, though not very graciously or very pleasantly. At any rate, it was all that Captain Chatteris desired, so he walked into the little parlour, and bowed to Mr. Beauvilliers. Josephine's father rose and offered his hand to the young officer.

At this moment the boys came in with all the delicacies that had been purchased by the captain. And now the eyes of Mr. Beauvilliers sparkled and widened. The poor gentleman had so long been an invalid—had so long been almost debarré from the pleasures of life, that he had grown to set great store on the single satisfaction that remained to him, namely, that of now and then enjoying some little delicacy in the way of food or wine. It was not often that he relished what he ate, although his wife and daughter denied themselves common necessities in order that he might have cheap luxuries; but now, when he saw pheasants, tongue, pigeon-pie, preserves, fruit, wine, cake, he absolutely drew a long sigh of delight. Here was a feast which would last him for days!

While he was smiling and looking at these good things, the captain was explaining how it was that he came to take the liberty of making these presents. He knew, he said, what an invalid Mr. Beauvilliers was, and he was aware that invalids often fancied things which were brought to them unexpectedly, and by strangers. He said he had been fortunate enough to have been of some service to Miss Beauvilliers, since had he not offered her his arm she must have slipped on the frosty pavement; but more than all this he really had a most interesting subject to discuss with Mr. Beauvilliers, touching that lost certificate of the marriage of Josephine's grandmother. To describe the start of delight which Mr. Beauvilliers gave, and the look of annoyance which curled the lip of Mrs. Beauvilliers, would be difficult, if not impossible. By this time Josephine had entered, having taken off her wet boots, her bonnet, and cloak. She had made no other alteration in her dress; it was scrupulously neat and perfectly simple. A bright fire burnt in the little parlour. Josephine herself spread the cloth, and placed some of the dainties upon the table. Captain Chatteris had already asked leave to sup with the Beauvilliers.

"Do not let us discuss business," he said, "until we have supped."

Mrs. Beauvilliers herself could not refuse to partake of the excellent pigeon pie, for scanty had been



the dinner that day at the white cottage. Josephine, too, ate with appetite. Everybody had a glass of the excellent port wine, and then they drew closely round the fire, and Captain Chatteris began his questioning.

"You are connected, I believe, Mr. Beauvilliers, with the Woodville family," he said, "the Woodvilles of Stoneleigh Priory?"

"It was my first wife who was connected with them," returned Mr. Beauvilliers, "my first wife, the mother of Josephine."

"I should like very much to hear the story, if you would be so good as to relate it to me."

"If you really desire to hear it I will proceed with the recital forthwith, though I fear you will find it tax your patience and courtesy."

#### CHAPTER X.

Sigh no more, lady, sigh no more,

Men were deceivers ever;

One foot in sea and one on shore;

To one thing constant never. *Shakespeare.*

"The story dates back some years," began Mr. Beauvilliers. "Josephine's grandmother was a beautiful girl called Constance Wyatt. She was as penniless as Josephine herself. She came from a good middle-class family of merchants, who traded with the West Indies. Her father speculated, was ruined, and committed suicide. Her mother died of a broken heart. Constance was then seventeen. She was reared from a fashionable boarding school by a stern uncle and aunt, who, instead of giving her a home in their house, told her that she must now support herself, and go out into the world as a governess or companion. About twenty pounds remained to her from the wreck of her father's fortune. This sufficed to purchase for her suitable clothes. She had also a few jewels remaining to her, and a situation was procured for her in the family of the Woodvilles, of Stoneleigh Priory. She was to be a sort of humble companion to Miss Woodville—a fine-looking, fastidious girl, three or four years older than herself."

"Sir John Woodville was the then holder of the title; his wife, Lady Woodville, was an extremely haughty, arrogant, and insolent woman, who treated all beneath her like dogs or slaves. You may think, then, that with such elements composing a family circle poor Constance Wyatt was neither very happy, nor very hopeful, nor contented. Miss Woodville was the veriest tyrant to her. There was a lady's-maid, and Constance was compelled to assist this lady's-maid in making and altering dresses and trimmings, and in obeying the most fanciful caprices of the baronet's daughter. She would take three hours to dress for a ball, try on everything her wardrobe contained, take it off, fling it on the ground, and trample on it if it did not happen to set off her beauty to the best advantage. In the morning Constance had to read to her, if she was not employed in working for her. Sometimes she would compel her to accompany her in her rides and walks. She would reprimand her cruelly and sharply in the presence of strangers. It seemed to be her object to humiliate the beautiful girl, and break her high spirit."

"Looking back to those circumstances now, through the lapse of long years, one can only surmise that this Miss Woodville must have been actuated by a cruel jealousy for the superior loveliness of Constance. The girl did not receive a large salary. Although the Woodvilles were enormously rich, they were proportionately close and stingy. There seemed no inducement then for Constance to remain at Stoneleigh Priory—at least only the inducement of having a shelter, food, clothing, and pocket-money; but she was friendless, she had no other home, and she stayed on. Then there came a change over the spirit of her dream. Miles Woodville, the eldest son, came home from Oxford in the autumn, and he fell desperately and hopelessly in love with the beautiful and friendless girl."

"At this stage of his narrative, Mr. Beauvilliers paused, and glanced towards his daughter Josephine. Captain Chatteris, whose eyes had been fixed on the exquisite downcast face of the young flower-maker, started, and then sighed heavily; and Josephine, although she had often heard the story before, felt her heart beat, and her cheek flush."

"It seems," she thought to herself, "as though papa were relating my history to Captain Chatteris. That friendless girl, with her strange fortunes, seems to have been a kind of forerunner of myself."

Captain Chatteris composed himself again to listen, and Mr. Beauvilliers continued the story:

"Miles Woodville was not one to deny himself anything on which he had set his heart. He contrived to follow Constance into the woods, into the retired bowers and alleys of the garden, into the quiet nooks and corners of the great old house, and every day he poured into her

ear the same flattering tale of his deep and devoted love for herself. It is very difficult for a woman to gauge the depth and sincerity of a man's love."

"Now all the while that Miles Woodville was prating about his wounded heart and his undying affection, he had never spoken one word of marriage to Constance Wyatt."

Here Josephine bent her face forwards into her hands—there was something in this story which caused her cheeks to burn and her heart to beat, and a tingling sense of indignation vibrated all through her frame. Mr. Beauvilliers continued his story:

"Constance was poor, but she was proud. She turned a deaf ear to all the protestations of Miles Woodville."

"Unless he means to marry me," she said to herself, "he shall be nothing to me."

"At last Mr. Woodville found out the kind of person he had to deal with, and he saw that he must abandon Constance altogether, or else make her his wife—and upon the latter course he decided. And so one morning he persuaded Constance to accompany him as though for a walk, to procure some peculiar ferns and roots in a wood at three miles distance from Stoneleigh Priory. There was a village near this wood, and a little church called St. Simon's, an ancient place, built of the ruins of the former convent. Now Miles Woodville had purchased a license from the poor, deaf old rector of this church. He was almost in his second childhood, and he was poor, and the son of the baronet successfully bribed him into secrecy. Constance Wyatt then, the poor companion, married the proud heir of a splendid house. None of the villagers knew Miles or Constance by sight, for Miles had always lived a great deal in town, and had seldom shown himself since his childhood in the neighbourhood of Stoneleigh. But there was one thing in which Constance showed a sort of prescience for coming events, as well as a determination and force of character rarely seen in the very young. She insisted upon taking a copy of the certificate of her marriage, and she would not give it up even into the keeping of Miles himself. At the same time she faithfully promised to guard the fact of their union as a profound secret until such time as her husband should come into the title and estate. She hid the certificate in a secret drawer of her jewel-case."

"She had no wish to annoy Miles Woodville by putting forth her claims, until the time should be convenient for them both. She really loved Miles, and she was contented to live at Stoneleigh Priory as an humble companion to his proud mother and insolent sister, while she secretly enjoyed his society at rare intervals. The young people were so cautious and prudent, that for a long time nobody suspected the facts of the case. And then suddenly Sir John, a stout and good-natured gentleman, died of apoplexy, and Miles became the reigning baronet. Now would have been the time to acknowledge his beautiful wife before the world, and to remunerate her for all the love that she had shown him and all the mortifications she had suffered for his sake; but this man, who was selfish and sickle, had grown so far tired of Constance that he would willingly have been rid of those matrimonial fetters which bound him to her. He had been introduced in London to a very handsome, and a very wealthy heiress—he was ambitious, he wished to go into Parliament, and to shine before the world. He was ashamed of his wife's antecedents; she was but the daughter of a ruined merchant, and she had no great connections."

"He was tired of her, but he was cunning. He knew that she had but to come forward and state her claims, and then he would be actually at her feet, for had she not married him at the church of St. Simon's? Was not the certificate there? Would not the clerk and the clergyman be compelled to corroborate her statement? And, besides all this, did she not hold that copy of the certificate? Was it not safely locked into her jewel-box? Now mark what Sir Miles proceeded to do: First of all he told Constance that his affairs were in a terrible condition—that is to say, he had gambled and speculated, and although he had come into great estates, it would be a year or two before the lawyers could manage to pay off all the loans and responsibilities which burdened them. Under these circumstances, he said that he should be thankful if Constance would keep her claims out of sight for the present. 'Such an imprudent marriage as I have made,' said he, 'would cause, if known, all kinds of remark and animadversion. This is just what I wish to avoid; therefore, if you are kind, you will continue to live as you have hitherto done as my mother's companion for a little while longer.'

"Constance may have thought this cruel logic, but she loved Miles, and she submitted. Three months passed away thus, and during all this time

Miles was in London, paying court to the heiress, Lady Pearl Golding, and Constance remained at Stoneleigh, submitting patiently to the caprices of Miss Woodville and the dowager."

"One night Sir Miles returned suddenly to Stoneleigh. He seemed very much excited. In the few moments' hurried conversation which he had alone with Constance, in one of the smaller drawing-rooms, he told her that he wished to give her a likeness of himself, which had been exquisitely painted in London. 'But,' said he, 'I should like to have it set in that gold locket of yours, surrounded with pearls, which is in your jewel-case.' He showed her the miniature, which was very beautiful. She was delighted with it. 'Now, give me the key of your jewel-case,' said he, 'and let me have out the locket quickly, for I am going to send it off with the miniature, by a messenger to-night to the post-office.' Now, the certificate of marriage in the church of St. Simon's was in that rosewood jewel-case."

"Never before had Constance trusted the key out of her possession—even now she hesitated, but at that moment the bell rang which summoned her to the chamber of Lady Woodville, who always had a cup of iced chocolate at that hour in her bed-chamber, while Constance read aloud to her from the pages of the newest magazine. So now Constance gave the key into her husband's hand, and went off to attend to her tyrannical mistress."

"Next morning Miles Woodville returned the key. At the same time there arose suddenly a hubbub through the house, for strange news had arrived—the little church of St. Simon's had been burnt to the ground the night before."

"Constance turned pale. One proof of her marriage then was destroyed, for it seemed that not a single article had escaped destruction. All the church plate had been melted by the heat of the flames."

"Sir Miles received the news lightly, and said he supposed the church was insured. Then soon after he mounted his horse, and rode off to the hunting field. He was brought back from that hunting field a dying man. He had met with a terrible fall. He was insensible. He was carried into his chamber; and laid upon his bed. The doctor arrived."

"Constance, the wife, was shut out of the room and had to smother her agony as best she might. At last she could support it no longer. The news came to her that the master was dying fast. Porcupine of a certain momentous secret that she had hitherto guarded from the eyes of the world, Constance rushed into the chamber of her husband, sunk upon her knees by his bed, and called loudly upon his name."

"Miles, Miles, it is I, your wife—it is Constance," and the voice penetrated to his soul.

"He opened his eyes, glared wildly about him and panted for breath. For a moment reason returned to him, and with reason repentance for his misdeeds—but, alas! the repentance came too late."

"Constance," he panted out, "is my wife. The certificate, I took it—hid it. You will find it in—Here a deadly spasm passed over the face, the head fell back on the pillow. Sir Miles was dead."

"Constance shrieked, threw herself upon the senseless corpse, and had to be removed by force. Then it was that her situation became apparent. The haughty dowager-mother and the arrogant sister comprehended that soon there would be an heir born to the estates, and should the child prove a boy, to the title of Woodville."

"But what was all that about the certificates? Soon they discovered that Constance had no proof whatever of her marriage. The church was burnt down which contained the original certificate, and the copy was secreted in a place where it could not be found. The rage and spite of those ladies towards Constance passed all bounds; they utterly denied her marriage, and stated that Sir Miles had been delirious at the time of his death."

"Constance applied to the vicar of St. Simon's for proof, but was horrified to learn that the old gentleman had died of apoplexy only the day before. There remained the clerk, and this man the rich ladies bribed, and he, being old, weak, timid, and poor, was brought stoutly to deny that he knew anything about it."

"Then those savage ladies, soon after the funeral of Sir Miles, sent for Constance one evening to the chamber of Lady Woodville. There they upbraided her with endeavouring to deceive them. Such great flames can use very opprobrious terms when it suits them to do so. They paid Constance five pounds, her quarter's salary, and they insisted upon her packing up and leaving the house at once—although it was ten o'clock at night and snowing hard—nor would they afford her the protection of a servant, nor the convenience of a vehicle."

"Constance was too indignant, too sick at heart to protest. She hurried her things into her trunk, wrapped the cloak about her, placed a hood upon her

read, her box was carried down for her to the avenue gate, and she was absolutely turned out into the snow with no other alternative than to leave her trunk there to be rifled, unless the passers-by should be honest; while she went forth to seek for shelter and help. She could move but slowly, for she was very ill, and Stoneleigh Priory stands a mile from the village. She had no choice, however, but to proceed as best she might, and by the time she reached the village inn, the 'Star,' she was almost dying. Her garments were covered with snow, her teeth were set, her eyes were fixed and glaring. She entered the little bar-parlour, and sank fainting into a chair.

"Mrs. Webster, the landlady, came forward with salts and other restoratives, and when Constance partially recovered, it was only to find that she was upon the verge of the most momentous era in her existence. Suffice it is to say that womanly care and sympathy were now evinced by an individual in the humbler walks of life. The landlady put the young sufferer into a warm bed, and sat up with her all night."

Here Mr. Beauvilliers abruptly broke off the narrative, and, leaning his head upon his hand, fell into a fit of deep thought. The listeners did not know whether the interruption proceeded from the fatigue incident to so long a recital, or whether it might be caused perchance by a flood of bitter memories sufficient to sadden even his self-indulgent and weak nature.

(To be continued.)

### MY MAID FENELLA.

"ONE night I went with Carlos, whose engagement ring I had worn just one week, down to the little bridge that runs over the stream, to look at the reflection of the moon in the water.

We said it was for that; and as an artist Carlos was always supposed to be on the look out for moonlight effects, and sunset beauties, and all that sort of thing; but when one has only been engaged a week, the midst of a circle of merry tourists is not always the pleasantest place to stay in. We longed to be alone for a moment or two, that is the truth of the matter. But when we reached the bridge we found we were not alone. There, leaning over the hand-rail, a pretty picture in her peasant dress, with her long black braids hanging down her back, was my maid Fenella. Beside her stood a man—a gentleman, I could see even in that dim light. He held Fenella's hand, and as we passed by I heard a soft whisper of endearment. They were lovers evidently, and the next day when we were alone I spoke to Fenella about it.

She only dropped me a little courtesy, and blushed shyly, and said nothing; and I—I was not old enough to preach to her, and I was quite romantic enough to believe that any gentleman might fall in love with beautiful Fenella, and be glad to make her his wife. Would I have loved Carlos less had his birth been humble? or would he have thought me less his mate had I been a peasant girl? We believed not. So I took counsel of my lover, and we decided that it was all very sweet and beautiful, and that all lovers were as true as we were; and we said nothing to the older folks about Fenella's lover.

I think that somehow Fenella and her lover guessed how we felt. They never seemed to heed us when we met in lonely spots. It was always evening, and I never quite saw his face, but he had a fine figure, bore himself exquisitely, and beneath the cloak he wore we saw the flash of jewels. He was someone of wealth if not of consequence, that was evident.

We tarried in that old villa only a few brief weeks. Those who had the direction of the party whisked us away to "do" other places before we two were tired of it; but ere I parted with my maid Fenella, hired only for the time of our sojourn, I had grown to like her very much, and somehow I could not help saying to her, as she braided my hair for the last time:

"Fenella, before next summer comes I shall be married. You guess who is to be my husband, of course. Would you like to come and be my maid when I am married?"

She blushed, and gave me that little courtesy of hers.

"I am glad Miss Pansy is to be so happy. I should like to be her maid if I were anyone's; but Miss Pansy will tell nobody? I am married." She put her hand into her bosom and drew forth a ring. "My wedding ring," she said. "He is very well born, and we must keep it secret awhile; but he loves me very much, and I, ah! how well I love him!"

So we exchanged confidences, I and my maid, and the next day we parted.

I returned home, but it was long before I quite forgot her pretty face and pleasant ways. Indeed, I

cannot say truly that I ever quite forgot them, but I heard no more of her.

I was married before the next spring came, and I lived a happy life with my husband for five pleasant years. Every spring we spoke of Italy, and planned to visit again the town where we had met and learned to love each other; but it was not until the sixth that we really carried out our plans, and after a week of travel by land and by sea, found ourselves in the quaint old place where Fenella had been my maid, and where I had dreamed my love-dream and know she had dreamt hers.

The old villa in which we had dwelt stood empty that summer, and, to make our visit still more full of sweet memories, we hired it for the season. With it we also hired the same old man and woman who had ministered to the wants of the large party of tourists who had crowded the villa during that vanished summer.

We two only had returned to it, and we lived in two or three of the many rooms in a sort of Bohemian fashion which we found very pleasant.

The very first day I had questioned the old woman about Fenella, and she had shaken her head.

"Fenella is dead," she said. "She died three months ago."

"And her husband?" I asked.

"Nobody knows where he is," the old woman said. "While madam was here with her party, so long ago, Fenella had a sweetheart; but he vanished, no one knew how or where. Then Fenella was very unhappy, but she told no one anything. She lived here in this house with an English lady, who took her as her maid, until the lady herself died. She used to sit by the window of that little room and weep. I have seen her; but she never told any one why. Never!"

Then my old servant shook her head again, and departed kitchenward, leaving me to think over poor Fenella's story. Somehow grief had come to my little waiting-maid. That, at least, was evident.

The little room that had been Fenella's opened out of mine. It was a small apartment, with a little folding bedstead placed against the wall, a statuette on a bracket, a chair, a table, and in the window a great box, in which grow some plants, and a great creeping vine which clung to the latticed panes and made an exquisite curtain.

Whenever I entered this room I felt a chill creep through me, and grew sad. I had noticed that from the first, and supposed it to be because the story the old woman had told me had had a strong effect upon me.

The image of Fenella weeping at the window seemed to have impressed itself upon my mind, so that I could almost see her sitting there.

As I lay in my bed, with the communicating door open, and watched the moonlight falling in chequered patches through the vine leaves down upon the floor, I often fancied that if I did but lift my voice and call "Fenella," I should see the trim form, in its pretty peasant bodice, trip across the sill. Often I even imagined the outline of a figure sitting beside the great box, bent forward toward it. It was only a shadow; only a flutter of the leaves; only something in my own eyes, or my own brain; but it proved how much I thought of Fenella.

Here she had lived, here sorrowed; and there are some who believe that the lives of those who have dwelt in any house leave an impress upon it ever after, affecting the after-dwellers very mysteriously. And we all know that there are rooms in which we cannot be comfortable, and others where a certain sense of peace possesses us, without any such tangible reasons as good or bad ventilation, pleasant outlook, or gloomy surroundings.

Once across the sill of Fenella's room, I felt instantly oppressed with sadness, even to the point of tears.

At last I awakened one night with a strange chill upon me. It was not the chill that precedes an illness—we all know it very well. A thought given to those mysteries, which all sensible people profess to doubt, will send it creeping through the blood of almost any one existing. I had been thinking of nothing, dreaming of nothing; but I awakened with this chill upon me, and looking through the door of the little room I have spoken of, which I naturally did whenever I opened my eyes, I saw Fenella.

Yes, my maid Fenella, just as she had looked when she lived with me. Her black petticoat, her red bodice, the white sleeves of her chemise were as plain as though they had been tangible garments. Her black braids fell to her knees. Around her neck hung the black velvet ribbon on which I knew she wore her wedding-ring. She was weeping bitterly, and bending as she wept over the box in which grow the vines and flowers which flung their shadow on the moonlit floor, so that she seemed to water them with her tears.

My first thought was that the old woman was mis-

taken—that Fenella lived and had returned to the villa in the night without thinking that it was inhabited.

"Fenella," I called—"Fenella, it is Miss Pansy; don't be afraid."

But, as I spoke, she was gone—gone without moving from the spot—gone as a bubble bursts and vanishes. I uttered a scream that aroused my husband from his slumbers.

I was advised to believe the whole scene a dream, and tried my best to think it so; but before three days had passed, I saw Fenella again.

This time I was not sleeping. I was in the garden, and looked through the window; and what I saw this time was Fenella, kneeling beside the flower-grown box, making the sign of the cross above it. Her face was like the face of death; her hands waxen white, like those of a corpse.

The sight was so terrible that I lost my senses, and was found by Carlos lying in a death-like swoon upon the grass, ten minutes after.

This time it could not be a dream; but still nothing could make my husband believe that I had seen a spirit, nor that I was a believer in ghosts. "Optical illusion" is a good suggestion—we used it. Carlos explained why it should have taken the form of Fenella, and threatened the doctor.

Weeks had passed. I had accepted my husband's version of my vision. I looked upon myself as the victim of optical illusion. I saw Fenella no more. I laughed at myself for having seen her, or for having fancied it. And the time had almost come for our return home, when, one night, we entertained one or two English friends in our little villa; and between the pauses of song and chatter, some curiosity that we had picked up in our travels was spoken of, and I ran into my room to get it.

It was a dark night. No moon flung its radiance through the windows. Only a little swinging lamp illuminated my apartment; but that inner room, once my maid Fenella's, was bright with a strange silvery light that seemed to grow as I looked upon it. And, as I stood motionless, gazing toward it, I saw my vision once again.

Fenella, paler than ever—but this time strangely occupied. She was digging in the earth about the roots of the vines, and heaping the mould into the form of a new-made grave.

"Fenella," I said. She did not vanish. "Fenella," I screamed. She turned toward me. I saw that a new-born babe lay upon her breast. She made the sign of the cross above it and was gone.

I crept back to my guests without having screamed or fainted. I had determined not to be scoffed at as a ghost-seer. I even kept my secret from my husband; but that night a strange thing happened. A tempest swept across the country and took our villa in its way.

It demolished a chimney and the deep window of Fenella's room; with it the flower-grown box and the great luxuriant vines.

We sent for workmen to clear away the rubbish, and this is what they found among it, deep down in the mould from which the vines had grown: A little box, in which lay the tiniest skeleton human eyes ever rested upon, and about its neck a little golden chain, to which hung a heavy, plain gold wedding-ring, with this name engraved within it: FENELLA.

A. O. C.

**THE COST OF OUR COAL.**—The following figures give the quantity of coal raised in Great Britain, with the loss of life which took place for each year, from 1868 to 1872:—

Date.	Tons of coal raised.	Deaths.	Tons of coal raised per death.
1868 ...	104,566,959	1,011	103,429
1869 ...	108,003,482	1,116	96,777
1870 ...	112,875,525	991	113,900
1871 ...	117,439,251	1,075	109,246
1872 ...	128,398,853	1,060	116,400

A RETIRED major of the Bengal service, a few days ago, by way of attracting the attention of Parliament to the difficulties he was suffering under from want of employment, put on his old uniform and his medals, shouldered a broom, and proceeded to sweep a crossing from the end of Parliament-street to the end of Palace-yard. This kind of demonstration was regarded by the staff of the Sergeant at Arms as an infringement of the freedom of members of the House of Commons, and the aggrieved officer was given into custody and carried before a magistrate, but on promising to abstain from this singular method of exhibiting his wrongs, he was released.

**DISCOVERY IN KERRY.**—An instrument for observing the altitude of the sun has recently been found under a stone near the harbour of Valentia, county Kerry, Ireland. When discovered it was enclosed in a case, which, on being touched, fell to pieces. The graduations were very carefully and



accurately made, but there was no maker's name or date. The instrument was of a most primitive kind, being intended to be suspended from the observer's thumb while he made the observation, and no such instruments have been used for the last two hundred and fifty years or more. Two ships of the Spanish Armada are known to have been wrecked near Valencia, and it may have belonged to one of them; or perhaps it was stolen from some merchant vessel, and concealed where it was found.

### ESTELLE.

It was a unique, Gothic structure, bristling with pinnacles, minarets and lance-like points, and profusely ornamented with elegant carvings. On the west two acres of strawberry plants were in bloom, their white petals and golden hearts uplifted to meet the caress of the sun. On the north stretched away a rich meadow, watered by a singing, sparkling brook. On the east an orchard of pear trees in full bloom. In front, facing the south, a half-acre of portulacca in bloom formed a lovelier carpet than man ere dreamt of making, and, farther down, a smooth, green field, dotted with dandelions and violets, finished the picture in nature's sweet simplicity.

"It is a paradise!" exclaimed Edith Delmar, as she alighted from the phaeton and came up the path between the variegated portulacca.

At that instant a masculine head appeared at one of the chamber windows, a pair of deep gray eyes were directed upon the lovely stranger, and then the man's finely-cut, roseate lips curled with impatient disdain.

"Another one overflowing with sentiment," he ejaculated, sinking back into his chair. "Why couldn't she have said, 'It's really a beautiful place,' and been sensible about it. A 'paradise on earth!' Bah! Harmony in a ward-room or ceremony between dogs and cats! I'm tired of such contemptible foolery!"

Pushing his hand through his wavy chestnut hair, with a restless motion, he wheeled his chair round to a desk, and began writing rapidly.

An hour passed, the man remaining in the same position, absorbed in his work.

"Wallace!" sounded a pleasant, womanly voice.

No answer.

"Wallace!" this time a little louder.

"What?" he answered, at last, somewhat sharply.

"I want you to come down. Miss Delmar is here."

"Oh, bother Miss Delmar. I'm busy."

"I'll torment you till you do; so you'd better come now before you get into a worse humour."

"Plague take the woman," he grumbled, throwing down his pen. "I'd like to find some Crusoe island where I could be alone a minute! I stipulated when I came here that I was to have my own way, and—I'll fix 'em though—I'll make this Miss Delmar hate me in three minutes, and then I'll have some peace."

But he was very careful to smooth his hair and whiskers, and remove every particle of dust from his elegant garments ere he left the room.

"What are you so cross about?" queried his sister, Mrs. Westcott, as he came down.

"Cross? Well, that's good! Why don't you use a little judgment? You wouldn't stir up a bear with cubs, but you make nothing of disturbing a man in the middle of an essay. I wish you'd be a little more consistent."

"Oh, fudge!" laughed the pretty brunette.

"A woman's answer!" muttered Wallace, with a shrug of his broad shoulders.

Miss Delmar was seated in the sumptuous drawing-room, gazing over the emerald fields, a placid smile on her noble features, a light of contentment in her lustrous blue eyes. She was not a beauty in the strict sense of the term, her face was too large for that, her form too full and commanding, but without being in the least Amazonian. There were a majesty in her presence, a winning gentleness in her manner, a reflection of heart and soul in her countenance—all of which combined rendered her indescribably attractive, and exercised a mystic charm upon nearly every one who approached her.

"Appearances deceitful again!" thought Wallace as he greeted her with a grave politeness. "She doesn't look like one of the gushing order, but she must be, else she would never have talked about 'paradise!'"

"How do you like her?" asked May, after Wallace had dragged out a proper length of time in the drawing room, and disgusted himself with commonplace remarks about travelling, scenery, summer heat, etc.

"Oh, she looks well enough, and that is all that is necessary."

"Wallace, you make yourself awfully hateful!" said May, reprovingly.

"It's a privilege of mine," he replied with a grim

laugh, and sliding into his chamber, locked the door.

"Anybody would think him awfully ill-natured," mused his sister, pouting her red lips. "But he isn't, he's the dearest, kindest brother that ever was, only he's so provokingly odd. I do wish he would act naturally once in a while."

For two days Wallace and Miss Delmar met only at the table. May felt somewhat mortified in consequence, and tried to explain that her brother was engaged upon a series of articles that must be finished at once, and hoped Stella would pardon his absence. Miss Delmar really hadn't missed Mr. Hartley, and this was said so coldly that all of Mrs. Westcott's dreams of making a match between them were crushed. On the forenoon of the third day another couple arrived at Strawberry Lodge—a Miss Clay, one of May's dearest schoolmates, and Herbert Appleton, a former friend of Mr. Westcott. The young lady—Kitty as she was called—was a bright, vivacious little fairy with shining hazel eyes, saucy, pouting lips, and masses of golden hair a shade or two lighter than Stella's.

"What a heavenly place!" exclaimed Kitty, clapping her hands with delight. "I shall expect to find angels at every step. I can't believe that this is the same earth I've been in."

"I'll give it up! I might as well try to work in pandemonium! I wonder why May doesn't import a whole cargo of magpies, and then set up a lunatic asylum for amusement."

He twisted his handsome features into a ridiculous look of disgust, and tossed his papers into his desk with a spiteful motion. Then clutching a straw hat, he fled from the house, never pausing until he reached a little hillock, at the foot of which the meadow brook made a detour to the south.

Throwing himself upon the luxuriant grass, he covered his face with his hat, and drew a long breath of relief.

"I'm safe for a minute now I hope. They won't find me in a hurry. Hello! What the deuce is that?"

He raised himself upon his elbow and listened.

"'Twas down in the meadow the violets were blooming,

And the spring-time grass grew fresh and green,  
And the birds by the brooklet their sweet songs were singing.

When I first met my darling Daisy Deane."

The old song was never sung more sweetly; each note seemed to quiver with sympathy, and rose upon the air in silvery strains.

"By Jove! that's a fine voice!" said Wallace, admiringly. "I wonder who owns it? I'd like to see her—upon my eye I would!"

His wish was gratified instantly. A soft, white hand put the bushes at his left aside, and Miss Delmar appeared.

"You have a fondness for ballads, Miss Delmar."

She started slightly; until he spoke she had been unconscious of his presence. Recovering her composure, she answered, quietly:

"Yes, but I was not aware I had a listener. I came out for a few moments' solitude."

"So did I," he answered, with a yawn.

"I trust I am pardoned for intruding upon you," she rejoined, icily. "I will repair the error, and bid you good-morning."

"You are very kind, I am sure," he said, with a provoking smile.

She stopped, and plucking a dandelion, began tearing it to pieces.

"I thought you were going," he remarked with irritating deliberation.

"I've changed my mind," she replied, with her head turned from him. "I've just thought that the grounds are as free to me as they are to you."

"Perhaps my presence is distasteful to you?"

"Don't move," she retorted, with a little laugh. "I shouldn't know you were near if you didn't talk."

"Very good indeed. Try again, Miss Delmar," he said, with a patronizing air.

A slight frown clouded her brow—his manner was little less than exasperating—and then there was so much confidence in his blue eyes, so much invulnerable composure in his smile. Instantaneously the scene was presented to her mind in a new light—the ridiculousness of it was clearly portrayed in each minute particular, and obedient to the impulse, she laughed long and loudly.

"Such nonsense!" she said, as the last dulcet echo died away.

"True; there is nonsense in everything," he answered, moodily. "Sense is a beggar, and goes about in rags."

"I've a mind to speak frankly to you, Mr. Hartley," said Estelle, looking him straight in the eyes.

"Do so, by all means; candour from feminine lips would be like gold from lead—a simple impossibility!"

"There it is again! Well, then, you act like an overgrown boy disappointed in love!"

His features moved not a particle—not a symptom of surprise or annoyance could be detected. He merely said with an approving nod:

"That is the best shot yet. You will really become witty if you persevere."

Her face flushed a little at this—his sarcasm had a sharp sting, but she revealed no other sign of discomposure.

"I wish to ask you a question."

"You may," he interposed, condescendingly.

"Thank you," she proceeded, calmly. "Do you think all women are fools?"

"Yes, in some respects."

"And men—what are they, pray?"

"Fools also."

"And what of marriage?"

"The very acme of folly."

"And death?"

"The end of folly."

She paused and gazed upon the man in perplexity. Sighing softly, as if almost weary with the burden of wonder that oppressed her mind, she queried again:

"What is life?"

"The analysis of folly."

"Then you cover love, devotion, sacrifice, patience, resignation, hope, faith, with the epithet, folly?"

"Oh, no."

"What are these, then?"

"The very rare exceptions to folly, my dear Miss Delmar," he answered, smiling.

She regarded him a moment in mingled curiosity and admiration.

"You call marriage the acme of folly. Now why?"

"Because eight-tenths of the people plunge into it before they are conscious of the science of single life—before they know what they marry for. One who cannot live understandingly with himself cannot expect to live decently with another person. Men know little about themselves, and less about the other sex—hence misery, bickerings, jealousies, divorce, etc."

"Do you think you understand this theory of yours well enough to marry happily?"

He laughed, and pushed his hand through his hair.

"No, I don't. But it is likely that folly, in one of her disguises, will deceive me into believing I do, and thus another example may be made for somebody else to preach about."

"You are consistent at all events," she said, artlessly. "I'll take back what I said about your being disappointed in love. I was wrong, but I think I have hit upon the right explanation of your peculiar manner now."

"Indeed! What is it?"

"The most shallow of follies—an affectation of eccentricity!" she responded, her blue eyes sparkling.

"You may be right," he replied, imperturbably. "I'll think of it."

"And I shall watch you, and when I see you giving way to frivolity or any kindred folly you'll know it. Now be on your guard."

"I will. Shall we walk back to the house now? It is nearly dinner-time."

Unconsciously they had dropped the manner of new acquaintances and acted towards each other like old friends. And neither thought of it until each had passed some time in solitude and reflected upon the events of the day.

Time passed rapidly now.

Without realizing it Wallace was being drawn into the vortex of society.

Kitty Clay was often with him, and her childish, careless manner, her happy, sparkling face and merry voice pleased him. He gave way to these attractions as one allows his imagination to carry him among the characters of a play when he is witnessing it. One bright moonlight evening he and Kitty were seated on the lawn gaily conversing.

"They say you are cynical, Mr. Hartley, but I couldn't believe it if I should try."

"Why not?"

"Because you are so courteous and have so high a respect for our sex," answered Kitty veiling her eyes, and so flirting her white arms, that her diamond bracelets caught the light. "I know how much this sounds like flattery, but it would be difficult to foist flattery upon you without your knowing it."

"You could accomplish the feat if any one could."

"You naughty man, you are flattering me now."

"No, I protest. There is no limit to the power of

fairies you know, and—"

A carol and then a tempest of silvery laughter cut short his words.

He sprang to his feet chagrined and mortified. Estelle Delmar and Mrs. Westcott were a few paces in the rear.

"You talk too loud when you become eloquent, Mr. Hartley," said the former, a triumphant sparkle in her eyes.

Wallace resumed his seat, thanking the ladies for the interruption in his sarcastic way, but he could not drive from his mind the fact that Stella had caught him in a very simple folly, and that she was doubtless comparing this theory with his practise. Why had he been foolish enough to chatter with that flirt Kittie? Why was he not in his room attending to his duties? His pride was severely wounded. Presently he arose and went to his room. Sitting down by the window he lit a cigar and sought to give vent to his vexation in long draughts of smoke. Minutes passed in silence, and then he heard Stella's voice utter the words:

"Fairies! Bah! Harmony in the wardrobe, or ceremony between dogs and cats!"

The sentences were familiar to him. She must have overheard him. His face flushed, he felt a tantalizing humiliation creeping over his mind. Did she think him a sophist or a niny, which? He would leave the Lodge the next day. He could not endure her clear misanthropic gaze after this. And yet the thought of parting with her was sad. Why should it be? He slept on the question and went out early the next morning for a walk. He directed his steps down the avenue, and paused suddenly upon the little bridge that spanned the brook.

"You here, Stella?" he exclaimed, using her given name for the first time in his surprise.

"I was not aware you were so near," she rejoined, with a twinkle in her eyes. "I came out for a few moments' solitude."

"So did I," he answered, regaining his coolness, and sending the application of her words.

Stella laughed, and Wallace could do no better than join in her mirth.

"You conspired to entrap me," he said, presently.

"And succeeded!" she exclaimed, proudly.

"It was all folly nevertheless."

"But it was very pleasant and amusing," she responded, the same arch look upon her features, that never looked so lovely as now. "I suppose you will grant now that some folly is innocent and diverting, and that even a man of your brain, your shrewdness can fall into it very easily."

"I claimed the same weakness for myself as for others, didn't I?"

"You did, pardon me," she hastened to answer. "I have gained nothing after all, and my boasting is vanity, a very insipid folly."

"You don't know what you have gained, Stella, and when you do I fear you will not accept it."

"What is it?"

"My heart, my love, my devotion." His face was pale now, his voice trembled. "Oh, my darling, will you take it?"

"Yes, Wallace, as the best blessing of my life," she murmured, her eyes full of unshed tears.

For a moment her beautiful head rested upon his breast in the rapture of love. It proved anything but folly. W. G. E.

Two interesting relics of the great fire at the Pantheon have been presented to the Queen for her museum of curiosities at Windsor. One is a finely carved elephant in ivory, belonging to General Benson, C.B., and rescued almost uninjured from the fire, though much blackened and discoloured; and the other a jewelled dagger of curious shape, a memento of the Indian Mutiny, belonging to Colonel Ouseley.

**DEATH OF AN AUSTRALIAN LANDHOLDER WORTH 4,000,000L.**—During the month two very old and well-known colonists departed this life—namely, Mr. W. J. T. Clarke and Mr. William Robertson, of Colac, whose names have been associated with the first settlement and early struggles in the colonisation of Victoria. Mr. Clarke was the largest landholder in the Australian colonies, and his property at his death was estimated at no less than 4,000,000L. sterling.

**THE LOSS BY THE BANK OF ENGLAND FORGERIES.**—At the meeting of the Bank of England proprietors recently, the governor made a statement as to the net loss which the Bank had sustained by the great bill forgeries of last year. The sum originally written off he said was 77,000L, but it had finally been necessary to write off 50,000L only. Since the account in which the sum of 77,000L had been written off, they had recovered nearly the whole of 73,000L, worth of property, but their expenses had been 46,000L, so that the net sum to be deducted from the amount previously written off was about 27,000L, leaving 50,000L, uncovered.

**THE CZAR'S JOURNEY.**—The St. Petersburg correspondent of the "German News" writes:—"On the 19th of April, old style (May 1)—i.e., two days after his birthday—the Czar will leave Petersburg for Berlin, where he will make a short stay. His Majesty will next proceed to Stuttgart, to be present at the marriage of the Grand Duchess Vera Con-

stantinova of Russia with Prince Eugene Wurtemberg. From Stuttgart the Czar will go to England to visit Queen Victoria and the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, and, finally, His Majesty will proceed to Ems for a course of the waters. The Czar is expected back in his dominions by the 8th of July, on which day the great manoeuvres are to begin at the camp of Krasnoe-Selo. After the departure of the Emperor, the Empress will take up her residence first at Tzarskoe-Selo and afterwards at Peterhof. Whether Her Majesty will travel or not is not known as yet. The Czarowitch and the Czarovna intend visiting Vienna, and afterwards England, next May. As regards the Grand Duke Alexis, it is again reported that he will go on a long sea voyage.

#### MOUNT SINAI.

THE exact situation of this memorable spot, sacred in the minds of all Christian people as the place where Jehovah appeared to man in fire; where the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of the Lord upon two tables of stone and delivered to Moses—has always been unsettled. But a Callio telegram announces that all doubt is now removed. Dr. Beke, the celebrated scholar and traveller, gives as the result of his recent expedition the discovery of Sinai and the finding of verifying inscriptions, of which he has made copies. The cable dispatch says that the expedition places the holy mountain at "a day's journey northeast of the village of Akaba, Arabia, at an altitude of five thousand feet above the level of the sea."

Dr. Beke has long maintained that Sinai was an extinct volcano, and the correctness of that opinion is now said to be fully confirmed by his personal explorations. Indeed, the Biblical account of the manifestations which took place at Sinai in the presence of the tribes of Israel, corresponds in several respects to the descriptions given in these modern times of the volcanic eruptions of Vesuvius. In the nineteenth chapter of Exodus the following graphic narrative is presented:—

"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled."

"And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood on the nether part of the mount."

"And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."

Moses then went up the mount, and the Ten Commandments were proclaimed; the inspired narrator adds:

"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off."

Subsequently, it will be remembered, the Israelites forgot their vows and went back to heathenish practices of idol making, and set up a metallic calf. Moses, on coming down from the mount, had the tables of stone in his two hands; and when he saw the molten calf, he threw down the tables and broke them in pieces. Then he broke up the idol, pounded it into fine dust, which he scattered in a brook that came down from the mount. The inspired narrative then tells us how, by prayer, the Lord was appeased, and He commanded Moses to hew out another pair of tables, and take them up the mount, which he did. Whereupon the Lord again wrote out the same Ten Commandments as at first, and gave the two new tables to Moses, who brought them down from Sinai and put them in an ark which he had made of shittim wood, "and there they be." Deut. x, 5.

It would be interesting to know what kind of stones are conveniently found at Sinai, out of which Moses might have hewn the tables. From their light weight, indicated by his carrying one in each hand, going up and down the mountain, it would seem as though they might have been composed of slate or other laminated formation. We presume that Dr. Beke's report will give full particulars of the geology of the neighbourhood, and perhaps tell us something new about the Mosaic stones.

**THE LATE COUNTESS DANNER.**—The Countess Danner, who died at Genoa, on Sunday, March 8, was the morganatic widow of the late King of Denmark, Frederick VII., and was the daughter of poor parents. Her name was Louise Christine Rasmussen, and she was born at Copenhagen on the 21st April, 1814. She was well educated, and became the principal of a school in Norway, where she remained for a time, but afterwards went to Paris, where she obtained an

engagement at a theatre, which she held for two years. Returning, after this engagement had terminated, to Copenhagen, she became an assistant to a miller, and while there attracted the attention of Frederick, then Crown Prince of Denmark, who became sincerely attached to her. Notwithstanding that their intercourse was from time to time broken by long absences, their mutual affection endured, and on the prince becoming King of Denmark, in 1848, Mdlle. Rasmussen was created Countess Danner.

#### THE DIAMOND.

As to the quality of the diamond, jewellers have stated that if they had an influx of a large quantity of secondary value, that very influx increased the value of the pure brilliants; and it was because they had such a large quantity of second-quality stones from the Cape that they had a great increase in value of the finest and purest water stones. It seems to be beyond doubt that whenever in any part of the world diamonds are found, the circumstances which accompany their presence have invariably been caused by water action. The conglomerate made up of rolled silicious pebbles, the gravel, the water-worn agates, zoolites, and other fragments of kindred substances with which they are associated, the Itacolumite rock out of which they are said to be quarried, and the peculiar silty lime or chalk and clay in which they are now being found in the neighbourhood of the Vaal River, are all alike, as regards their arrangement and present condition, the results of aqueous action.

The diamond, we are told, is resolvable by heat, in an atmosphere of oxygen, into pure carbonic acid gas. This gas, chemists say, is capable of being converted into a liquid state by a compression equal to the weight of between 1,300 or 1,400 feet of water or about 40 atmospheres, and scientific observers are said to have recognized microscopic water plants (Algae) and splinters of ferruginous quartz enclosed in the diamond. Such facts seem capable of throwing much light on the question we are now investigating.

The opinion quoted from Humboldt that diamonds must exist somewhere in the Sierra Nevada region, continues to circulate and to incite fresh searches. The most important information on the subject is from Professor Benjamin Silliman, who lately communicated to the American Institute of Mining Engineers a statement that he has detected, in appreciable quantity, the presence of microscopic diamonds in the sands of the hydraulic washings in California, associated with zircons (hyacinth), topaze, quartz, chromic iron, etc., and that the occurrence of diamonds of some size in the sands from the gold washing of that State is not uncommon. This information comes from a source that commands attention and respect, and it seems to prove the truth of Humboldt's opinion. These minute diamonds must evidently have resulted from the abrasion of diamond against diamond in the natural fastnesses of the mountains from which both the gold and the gems were washed by the torrents dashing down the declivities. What may yet be hidden by the snow and ice of the lofty sierra can only be conjectured. The gold washings of the first placer diggings were traced to their rocky sources, and so we presume it will have to be with the diamond washings, since they evidently come from rich diamond mines as yet unknown. For a long time gold was found in such abundance in California that nothing else received attention, and even in gold mining immense quantities of auriferous soil were neglected from which the Chinese have ever since been obtaining gold. It is therefore not surprising that while diamonds are likely to be found there the search has not been extensive or successful.

#### THE BLENKARNE INHERITANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Miss Arlingcourt's Will," "The Ebony Casket," "The Secret of Schwarzenburg," etc., etc.

#### CHAPTER IX.

THE colonel went up again to his visitor, and seized both her hands.

"I must give you a warmer welcome than before," he said, in a tremulous voice. "Ah, a much warmer welcome! My dear boy, I did not know there could be so much pleasure given to this tired old heart of mine. Let me look into your face. I ought to find something familiar there."

The young gentleman bore this scrutiny for a moment; then, starting forward a little nervously, he exclaimed:

"A foreign country changes one's very nature, I think. At least, my father says so. Our hot Calcutta suns make sorry work with the fresh English complexion. I am almost as sallow as the Hindoo woman who took care of me. I trust your cool breezes will bleach me out. They seem, at



least, determined to freeze the very marrow of my bones," he added, laughingly, looking longingly at the rich fur-lined cloak he had thrown aside on entering.

"You are chilly? Why, certainly it is natural enough. Dalby, put a little fire in the grate. Take a glass of wine, my boy," cried the colonel, himself pouring out the wine.

The young gentleman was by no means backward at accepting it, and drained the glass. He seemed a little more at ease afterwards.

"You are not aware of all the circumstances, I see," resumed the colonel, when the fire was kindled and his young visitor sat basking in its blaze.

And he took up the letter and referred to it again. "No. General Vansittart is a man whose will is promptly obeyed, and who keeps his own counsel. So much as he chose to tell me I know. More than that I never ventured to inquire. Of course I have always seen that there was some old and painful secret, but I do not press its recital. When my father is ready for me to know he will tell me."

And the young man, twining his supple white fingers together, held them down to the fire.

Colonel Blenkarn sighed.

"To think he is alive, and has made such a glorious name for himself," he murmured. "But I marvel he had not sent you here before."

His visitor shrugged his shoulders.

The colonel, leaning back in his chair, gave himself up for a few moments to a deep and not altogether painful reverie, for he smiled as often as he sighed, holding fast to the letter and turning to it every now and then.

"I wish Ralph had come himself," he exclaimed, presently. "I find so much that is mysterious still in this letter. What can he mean by that inquiry concerning the clause in my uncle's will? Is it possible that the Blenkarn emeralds—but no, it is too absurd to think of such a thing."

He started presently, aware of the lustrous black eyes opposite fixed in questioning eagerness upon his face. "I beg your pardon. You must think me an indifferent host. But your father's letter has roused so many long dormant hopes and fears that I am scarcely like myself. How long did you stay since you arrived?"

"A few days only. I waited, you know, to present my letters of credit, and to be rested a little, as well as made over by an English tailor."

The gay laugh was somehow unpleasant, for all its musical tones.

"Would to Heaven poor Ralph had remained in England," thought the colonel. "This son of his has a strange, eerie way with him, for all he is so handsome."

But aloud he asked:

"And your voyage—was it a comfortable one, and were your fellow-passengers agreeable?"

The young fellow bent again over the blaze of the fire. Was it to hide the momentary tremor that crossed his face and blushed out its olive tint to sallow pallor? But he answered, indifferently:

"About as the usual run. I was tired enough of it, at all events. But I suppose I ought to settle something about my own arrangements. I left all until I had consulted with you. I suppose I had better find rooms here in this town—rooms for myself and a servant of some sort. Is it the way gentlemen live in England—in a suite of rooms like these?"

And the visitor glanced around the comfortable but unpretentious apartment with a rather transparent contempt.

The colonel smiled calmly.

"It is the way a retired colonel of His Majesty's service lives certainly, but not at the style they will show you at Blenkarn Terrace."

"Blenkarn Terrace," repeated the youth, his black eyes sparkling. "Yes, that is a grand place—I have seen it. Ah, and my lady is a magnificent woman, a wonderfully magnificent woman. I had not marvelled had they told me it was the queen herself. Does the young lady live there?"

Colonel Blenkarn started at him in utter amazement.

"You have been to Blenkarn Terrace? Good Heavens! man, your father did not send you there?"

He shrugged those flexible shoulders that had a Frenchman's way of helping out his meaning more than common people's descriptive words.

"Bah! I suppose not; but it was a natural mistake. I had the name, Blenkarn, in my mind, on my tongue, and asked for such a family, and they sent me there, which was none too fine for my anticipations, you know; for General Vansittart's house at Garden Reach is like a palace, and I expected—"

Here he glanced around again.

"Your father has done wrong if he encouraged you to expect any fine houses or grand doings with us," spoke out the colonel, shortly. "And yet, poor fellow, how should he know? We were fine enough in our surroundings once. But it is too

preposterous. You went to the Terrace with that letter—"

"And asked for Colonel Blenkarn," continued the other, looking straight into the elder gentleman's face. "A lady was just crossing the hall and heard me. She turned and came sweeping down toward me. Ah, a grand lady. I have not seen her like—but once," and here that same little shiver of terror crossed his face. "You come here for Colonel Blenkarn?" she demanded. 'Are you a madman?' Then I made her my finest bow and said: 'Pardon me, my lady, I am a stranger just arrived from Calcutta with a letter of introduction from General Vansittart, my father, to one Colonel Guy Blenkarn. The people sent me hither. If I am wrong I beg your pardon.' Then she waved her hand and said, gnawing all the while fiercely at that fine red lip of hers: 'Set him right, Matthew. Tell him to seek elsewhere for Colonel Guy Blenkarn, not here at Blenkarn Terrace, until Lady Blenkarn and Sir Marmaduke are both removed from his path.' 'Sdeath, sir, but there might have been something unpleasant for you had you been there!'"

Colonel Guy was deadly pale, and a fiery glimmer shone from his usually mild, benignant eyes, but he answered calmly:

"Undoubtedly. I take good care not to subject myself to any such odious experience. But I do not choose to revive any unpleasant family reminiscences to-day, and since you are ignorant of the history I shall leave you so. About your taking up your residence here, it seems to me you are the best judge. I should suppose you would find it dull, and would prefer London, or at least Liverpool."

"But I do not hold myself to my own desires, even supposing they should be such as you surmise," said the young man, eagerly. "I came to obey my father's command. To—"

"To marry my niece," said the colonel, slowly. "But supposing she does not please you, or you do not win her favour?"

"You will settle it between yourselves, I suppose, you and my father. Nevertheless, I am little concerned. I seem to feel assured it will all go well."

The colonel sighed again. His impressions concerning his visitor were hardly as prepossessing as at first. Perhaps the latter detected it, for, rising from his seat, he came forward with a winning smile, and a singularly childlike frankness of demeanour.

"My dear sir, now you are half-versed with me, I am sure. If you knew General Vansittart better, and how his son has been brought up to rely upon his judgment, to obey implicitly his wishes rather than commands, you would see that I have such full faith in his superior wisdom that I have no doubts whatever. Besides my dreams have shown me the young lady everything charming and adorable."

Colonel Blenkarn's face brightened.

"We will see, presently," he said. "I will send Dalby to look for rooms for you, and then you can choose for yourself. After which I will take you out to the Manor House, and my sister shall read your father's letter. Ethel, at first, had best remain in ignorance."

"Let me accompany the man myself. I confess I shall be far more at ease if I have my own quarters as a retreat."

"There is a suite to let over the club-room," suggested Dalby, who was standing respectfully by the door in answer to his master's call; "and for this gentleman perhaps they may not be too expensive."

"Let us see them by all means. I must have a fire at all events, and, my good fellow, can you get me a valet?"

"A dozen, if you like," answered Dalby.

As the pair went out together Colonel Blenkarn flung himself again into the chair and took up the letter.

"What does he mean by promising that this union shall restore our family to prosperity and its old place? And that earnest command for me to send him the precise clause of the will. I cannot keep the emeralds from my mind, especially when this poor old ring I gave poor Ralph so many years ago recalls what I said to him, pointing to its mock emerald, 'Go and find the hiding place of the Blenkarn Emeralds!'" Good Heavens! can so wild a thought have any foundation in truth? Has he found them? Ah, what ecstasy but to catch at the phantom of such an idea! What would it not do for my darling Ethel, and for this noble-spirited Aubrey, chafing away his proud spirit under our galling yoke of poverty? Ah, those emeralds! I vorily believe, at this late day of my life, the chimera at which I have always scoffed has taken possession of me in all its wilting fascination."

He sat lost in a deep dream, and did not hear the light knock at the door, nor suspect any one was

near until the door unclosed and Aubrey Roscoe came in.

"Asleep, Uncle Guy?" he asked, as he sank down wearily and removed his hat, wiping his forehead again and again as if to remove the pain there.

The colonel looked up at him eagerly, and his keen eyes read the melancholy of the pale, high-bred face.

"You are out of spirits again, Aubrey. Dear boy, I scarcely wonder, but yet as Ethel says it won't do; we must fight against depression. You have had no success yet at the institute?"

"No, nor with Balde and Rich, nor at the Patent office nor anywhere. Uncle Guy, I am going to apply shortly for permission to saw wood or cart coals. Do you think that also will be refused me?"

And he laughed bitterly, a woeful jangle of such youthful tones.

"Aubrey, my lad, I have a glimpse of something brighter, and yet I hardly dare trust to it, lest the disappointment should make us sorer still. And yet it is positive good news. Look! I can trust you to keep it to yourself. Read the letter."

He handed it over. The young man took it listlessly, but as he read his face showed his dawning interest.

"Alive!" he exclaimed, "and evidently prosperous! Well it will be joyful indeed to have Ethel saved from the general wreck. The dear, unselfish, brave-hearted girl; I am almost famishing now for the words of comfort she finds when no one else can see anything but despair."

"Read it over again, Aubrey," said the colonel, keeping the suppressed excitement out of his calm tones. "See what he hints about the future prosperity of the families, and—and note that request for full and verbatim particulars for the strange clause in Sir Ralph's will."

Aubrey read; a swift flash of crimson flashed over his pale face; he looked up, met his uncle's eye, and sprang forward, grasping the hand the other stretched out almost unconsciously.

"Great Heaven, Uncle Guy! of what are you thinking? Don't drive me mad with an uncertain hope! You believe they are found. Oh, dizzying, blissful thought! You believe he has found the mythical Blenkarn Emeralds!"

Aubrey Roscoe turned away hastily, and strode to the window, throwing it up, and leaning out as if to obtain a breath of air.

He murmured words of which his uncle caught nothing; but one name came floating back, perhaps because the tone in which it was spoken was one of such intense emotion.

"Oh, Christabel, Christabel!" had been his cry.

Colonel Blenkarn started at the name.

"Poor youth! brave Aubrey!" he mentally ejaculated. "No wonder he has been well nigh crushed to despair, if he is in the toils of that lovely little witch, the great banker's heiress. Oh, my splendid, priceless treasure! you can save us all, if you will only be found. Heaven grant the magic spell has been broken, and we shall see and touch, ay, and claim, the Blenkarn Emeralds!"

Her ladyship was wandering restlessly from one sumptuously-furnished room to another. She sat down a moment at the great harp in the music-room, and swept forth from it a wild, frenzied lament. Then she rose again and selected a book in the library and sat down with it, but presently tossed it contemptuously from her, rang the bell twice, and ordered her carriage.

"Where shall I drive to, my lady?" questioned the coachman.

"To Cedar Knoll," answered she, leaning back among her velvet cushions wearily.

It required an hour of steady trotting on the part of the sleek and spirited horses to bring Lady Blenkarn to Cedar Knoll—a dark, forbidding place, drearier even than its name.

A tall, shivery-looking house, dark and massive enough for a prison, perched upon a rise of ground with a grove of tall but blighted-looking cedar trees surrounding it on all sides but the front.

Not a creature was to be seen about the place, and Lady Blenkarn herself shivered, and folded her costly shawl more closely around her as the footman opened the door for her and then rang the bell.

The door opened, and without a spoken word the melancholy-looking old man behind it made way for her to pass, which she did silently, and proceeded to mount the tall, dark staircase, into which scarcely a ray of sunshine ever penetrated, for the windows were all shrouded with thick drapery, threading her way along the corridor with the manner of one familiar with the place.

At a right-hand door she paused, gave a light tap, and it was opened by a small, shrivelled old man in rusty clothing, with a pair of huge green glasses over his nose.

"Our young lady, madame," announced he, in a sing-song, monotonous voice.

Upon which Lady Blenkarn advanced farther



[MADAME BLANC'S ANGER.]

into the room, which was pervaded by a dim twilight like the rest of the house, the sunlight being carefully excluded by two sets of curtains at the windows, and dropped listlessly into a straight-backed chair set exactly in front of another similar chair, in which was seated a strange figure, which might have caused an unfamiliar visitor to shrink and tremble.

The wizened, wrinkled face of this strange figure seemed formed of some yellow leather rather than human cuticle, with two piercing, snake eyes looking out from under a white muslin turban, upon which blazed with the most weird effect a splendid rary, set so as scarcely to show a glimmer of the gold used in securing it, and having the effect of a huge drop of blood. Long snow-white hair streamed from under the turban, and over the black mantle in thin, elfish locks. The form seemed more a mummy's than a human being's, and yet straight as a dart, and apparently nimble and supple still, and wrapped in fold upon fold of faded black velvet. Two claw-like, skinny hands, on which two magnificent rings hung as loosely as on skeleton fingers, were spread out upon the black velvet lap—the gems, being a diamond and a ruby, each of a size to tempt a connoisseur. And around the sallow throat blazed again a line of blood-red fire from a necklace of the same rare jewels.

The woman sitting in her high-backed chair looked like the incarnation of some ancient witch legend. She might have been eighty-five years of age, judging by her looks, or one hundred; for that matter two hundred even. She had reached that place where the passing years no longer left any mark. Methuselah could not have looked older, nor could she though she lived thrice a decade more. All that seemed left for death to accomplish was to blow out the flame, that, burning within and looking forth still with such strength and power from out those glittering eyes, held the living essence to the singular-looking body.

Lady Blankarne sat down opposite her, however, with the same weariness of manner, undaunted by the close scrutiny of those glittering black eyes, and languidly threw back the rich lace veil, revealing her handsome, bitter, melancholy face.

A shrill cackling laugh echoed through the room. "Out of sorts again. Ha! ha! do you know, Amariah, our young lady never comes here except when she is out of sorts?"

The old man in the rusty small-clothes and green spectacles, still standing by the door, rubbed his hands together and responded with a feeble echo of a laugh.

"It is too common a circumstance to laugh at, I should say," said Lady Blankarne, coldly. "There

is no need for me to ask how you are, aunt. I see you are in your usual health."

"Did you come all this way to ask after the old woman's health?" came sneeringly through the thin, gray-lips. "Why, Amariah might have told you about that yesterday when he was at Blankarne Terrace."

"No, I had no intention of assuming that I did," returned her ladyship, a light, contemptuous sneer curling her proud lip likewise. "I think that is one character I have never attempted with you, aunt. I have never been a hypocrite."

"Then why did you come?" persisted the mummy. "Because I was restless and miserable, I suppose," returned the other, looking up with a fierce passion in her eyes, "and I knew you could make me more comfortable, whether it will be better or worse."

The mistress of Cedar Knoll bent forward a little farther, and searched with that piercing eye over the speaker's face. It did not blench, though perhaps the colour mounted faintly.

"Something new gone wrong?" she muttered. "Why do you fret and fever so? You will wear yourself out, and leave the place free to the hated race."

Lady Blankarne arched her neck haughtily, and her eye flashed.

"Amariah," said his mistress, "you may leave now. Our young lady and I are going to have a pleasant little talk of old times."

"I go, Madame Blanc," he said.

And Amariah bowed with due humility, and noiselessly took his departure.

"Well, child, what is it?" demanded Madame Blanc, in a more feeling tone. "Sit down on the cushion, as you used to sit, when you were really what Amariah will call you if he and you lived fifty years longer—our young lady."

"Would to Heaven I were back to that time—back farther yet, to my poor cottage home, and my innocence and light-heartedness again!" burst from Lady Blankarne's quivering lips, as she sank upon the velvet ottoman at Madame Blanc's feet and buried her face in her hands.

The old woman watched her with a cold, contemptuous smile.

"Oh, is that all?" she said. "Only a silly, sentimental fit of vapours. I really thought there was something serious. I had better call Amariah back."

And she stretched out her hand towards the bell-rope that hung within reach of her chair.

Lady Blankarne looked up haughtily, dashing away the hot tears with her lace handkerchief while she returned fiercely:

"I did not expect you to sympathize with me. I know how utterly vain it would be for me to show you that beneath all the icy mask I wear I hide a yearning, aching human heart. But I came for you to talk back my pride, my hatred, my revengeful thirst, that at least I may have strength to go on—to cheat myself into believing I am happy and content with the bed I have made all myself."

And then she wrung her hands again, as she repeated, bitterly:

"Have made all myself! No, no! Heaven above me knows that is not true. I am the victim of bitter, cruel circumstances, pressing sharp and heavily, so that a poor writhing worm could not escape. Only once—only once have I been wickedly, unnaturally guilty. It is the brand of that which is killing me. Oh, the bliss, the purity, the happiness I put away from myself with the rash hand that only thought of dealing out ruin and misery to its enemies! It is that which will drive me mad!"

And again the proud head sank low into the clasping hands, and the hot tears poured through them. "You will soon go mad!" exclaimed Madame Blanc, those evil black eyes gleaming ominously, "if you stoop to this drivelling folly. What hinders you from being happy, you, the rich, honoured, prosperous Lady of Blankarne Terrace?"

"Because I have a human heart and not a stone within my breast," answered the other, sorrowfully. "Look you—I have come but a little time since from Sir Marmaduke's side. He snarled and struck at me as at a hated thing."

And she shuddered even now at the recollection. Madame Blanc still laughed.

"Well," demanded she, contemptuously, "and do you love with all a mother's fond affection this ungrateful Sir Marmaduke?"

Lady Blankarne's shuddering face showed a miserable blending of loathing, horror and contrition as she gasped, hoarsely:

"You know I do not. Aunt, how can you torture me so?"

"Then I do not see why you are not quits. Leave Sir Marmaduke alone. He serves his purpose well. Does he not keep off that proud and treacherous brood from the rich lands and income of Blankarne? As for you, I see no reason why you may not enjoy the soft delights your silly heart craves. You have served my purpose. I bear no ill will to you. It is your own fault if you are not happy."

"I have served your purpose! What do you mean?" demanded Lady Blankarne, springing suddenly to her feet and confronting with as fierce a glance the gleaming eyes before her. "Woman-friend, tell me if you also have made a tool of me?"

(To be continued.)





[A PARTING SHAFT.]

## THE DOUBLE BONDAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"The Lost Coronet," "Elgiva," etc., etc.*

## CHAPTER XIX.

Winter's cold or summer's heat,  
Autumn's tempests on it beat,  
It can never know defeat.

Never can rebel.

Such the love that I would gain,  
Such the love, I tell thee plain,  
Thou must give, or woo in vain.

"MAUDIE, I have arranged with the pater for a riding party to-day," said Lord Cranmore, entering the morning-room, where the ladies of the family were engaged in some feminine apology for work.

"Very probably, Bernard; what then?" asked Lady Maud, with real or affected indifference.

"Why, an amiable settlement of the how and the when," returned Lord Cranmore, with a lightning glance at Gwenda, who at the moment was bending over an embroidery frame without appearing to notice his entrance.

"I cannot be worried with any such details," returned Maud, carelessly. "I hate to look forward to every minute arrangement of the day's pleasure. They should be surprises to give them full effect, in my opinion."

"Do you mean to go on in that style during life, Lady Maud?" asked a voice which was certainly not Lord Cranmore's.

And looking hastily up from her book, the girl saw that Lord Saville had followed her brother into the room.

"Lord Saville!" she exclaimed, a vivid flush dyeing her cheeks, either of vexation or shyness. "Do you not know that this is forbidden ground, except by special permission?"

"Possibly, but I took the precaution to ask Lady Brunton's leave, besides having your brother as a protecting shield," returned the viscount, coolly. "Besides, to quote your own words, you prefer surprises," he continued, with a slight sarcasm in his tone.

"Always provided they are agreeable ones," she said, laughingly. "My words did not apply otherwise. Bernard, do, please, fix the hour and the horses and everything else, so that I have no trouble about it till we start."

"One moment, petite sour," said Lord Cranmore, lightly. "Are you grown more brave since you were at home last? Because much will depend on the state of your nerves, I must assure you, in my plans."

"I do not want to have my arm dislocated or my neck broken, if that is your meaning," she replied,

quickly; "but I am not a coward, as you would imply, Bernard."

"Very well, and you, Miss Loraine?" continued the young man, turning to Gwenda, with a lower intonation in his voice that gave it a peculiar softness to the ear of one at least of the group.

"I do not care what I ride," answered the young girl, with a half-proud, half-scornful smile. "I never was afraid, and I like some difficulty and excitement."

"Very well, then I go armed with instructions. Saville, you had better remain here a few minutes till I return. I am only just going to the stables. I shall not be many seconds."

And he sprang away, without waiting for a reply.

Lord Saville coolly threw himself on a chair at almost equal distances between the two girls.

"It is rather amusing to trace the different moods of you fair inseparables," he said, with a smile that had more cynicism than mirth in it. "Lady Maud likes indolent peace; to be waited upon, her wishes studied like a queen. And you, Miss Loraine, prefer conquering excitement and difficulties. Is it a very uninteresting problem to speculate what will be your fates in the gratification of such moods?"

"You take trifles most seriously, Lord Saville," said Lady Maud, quickly. "It would seem almost as if you had never met with more important subjects than such girlish nonsense to occupy your thoughts. One must be very careful what is said before you, I perceive."

"That is, you must not be frank and true, Lady Maud. Out of the abundance of the heart, we are told, the mouth speaks. Is it not so in your case?"

The girl had not time to reply ere the door again opened, and her brother entered.

But there was a deep scarlet spot on either cheek that told of the impression the few careless words had made on her mind.

Lord Saville's eyes did not even turn towards her, however. So that whatever might have been his interpretation of the emotion he had created, it did not seem to be observed by him.

"What is your opinion, Miss Loraine?" he said, gaily, as Gwenda rose to accompany her friend for the preparations consequent on the coming expedition. "Have you faith in lightly-spoken words?"

"No," she replied, half-reprovingly. "Surely it is not necessary to wear the heart on the sleeve, though perhaps small things may be some omen of more important ones. I am afraid you are a very uncomfortable personage, Lord Saville," she added, archly, as she bounded from the room after Maud's retreating figure. "It is hateful to weigh every word one says."

Lord Saville gazed after the girls, as the door slowly closed in his hand.

"And I fear she is somewhat of a vixen, is it not so, Cranmore?" he asked, coolly. "Your sister seems a great deal softer and more malleable in her temper."

"Perhaps Maud is somewhat in bondage, while Miss Loraine is free," was the indignant reply. "You perhaps do not know that she is fair and an heiress, Saville."

"Therefore a very repellent sort of damsel, in my opinion," answered Sholto, carelessly lounging from the room to his own apartments. "Nevertheless," he added, sotto voce, "more interesting and with more decided character than my destined bride. Pahaw! the idea is extremely odious—beyond endurance. Better end it at once. She can scarcely like it better than myself. Suppose I try it on?—yes—if she depends so much on homage and devotion I can settle the matter perhaps. If there could but be some compromise. But—no—hang it all—the bond is too strict for that."

Lord Saville's whole soul was too embittered to be just.

Laura de Fontane's face, Laura's voice and words and gestures were ever present with him, even while conversing with her younger and innocent rival. She could never be his. She was for him a forbidden goddess. But still he clung rather to that worshipping friendship, which was the name he gave to his feelings for Count de Fontane's wife, and shrank from binding himself by the chain of marriage with another and more lawful idol.

It was some hours afterwards, when the little party were cantering along the lovely lanes that led to the romantic ruins on the banks of the fair Wye.

But none of them much heeded the beauty of the landscape that surrounded their steps.

Lord Cranmore and Gwenda were far in advance. The high-couraged steed of Miss Loraine would not brook restraint of his eager speed. And Bernard rather encouraged the pace that put an effectual separation between them and their companions.

"Gwenda, dearest," he exclaimed, so soon as the words could be safely uttered, "at length I have some chance of speaking to you alone and unfettered. Are you unchanged, my beloved? Have you no regrets for having in your early days bound yourself to me, before the world was at your feet to choose from? Speak, my beloved. I long to hear your voice saying what, I hope—I believe, I have read in your eyes, your manner, your very tone."

Gwenda was well nigh panting from the rapid pace at which they had ridden, and yet more from the agitation the words had caused.

"No, Bernard, never," she said, softly. "Only if your parents do not approve, we cannot be happy, we must submit or wait."

"Silly Gwenda," he replied, fondly, "as if any one, even a stern father, could resist beauty and fortune and grace like yours, and—"

"But not birth. I have not birth, at least not that can be proved—*not such as yours, Bernard*," she interrupted, sadly.

"Hush! Your high-bred loveliness is pledge enough for your descent, dear one," he said, eagerly. "However that need not be discussed by us now. It is all joy before us, my darling. So soon as Maud's marriage is settled, I shall have the marquis's permission to ask you openly for my bride. And you will scarcely refuse, will you, my beloved?"

He laid his hand fondly on hers as he spoke. Perhaps in so doing he touched the bride-rein of the high-couraged horse, or Gwenda's sudden thrill of happiness might disturb her firm hold over the animal.

The next moment he plunged, kicked and reared so violently as to utterly endanger Gwenda's seat in her saddle. But she still kept her self-possession, and clung to the bridle and pommel firmly for support, as the proud creature, irritated rather than soothed by Lord Cranmore's attempts, at last got the bit between his teeth, and set off at a mad pace, which defied any hope of following, even had not Bernard's own sense shown the folly of such an injudicious effort.

A groan, which was rather a wail of agony than a cry, escaped him, as he paused for a moment, and then, leaping over a hedge, galloped across to a spot where in all probability the horse would take its course.

But when it arrived where would Gwenda be? The terrible doubt haunted him like a goad, till at length the suspense was ended.

The horse appeared at last, hot, panting, well nigh exhausted by his mad fury and speed—but riderless! Gwenda had evidently lost her balance, and was, too probably, lying crushed and dead upon the road the animal had taken.

Bernard's whole soul was sickened at the fearful prospect, and he could scarcely nerve himself to the task of searching for the unhappy and loved girl he accused himself of having murdered by his own rashness.

And meanwhile scarcely less eventful words had been spoken by that other, equally bound though less loving pair, as they had taken their more deliberate way along the roads.

There had been a pause, a dead, hushed silence between them for a time.

Sholto was nerving himself to learn his fate, but alas! scarcely from the motives and feelings that usually actuate an expectant suitor.

And Lady Maud? What of her? Ah, time only would show what her hopes and wishes would prove and what sort of justice her half betrothed lover did to her character and her truth.

At last the crisis came.

"Lady Maud," sounded on the girl's ear, in a strange, constrained tone.

She turned her head calmly towards her companion. There was an unusual paleness over the face, but she did not yield to any weakness of which it might be a symptom.

"Did you speak, my lord?" she asked, in a half-questioning, half-satirical tone, as she marked his constrained expression and bearing.

"Yes," he said, emboldened perhaps by the touch of scorn in her voice. "Yes, Lady Maud, I—I will go on to say plainly what must be spoken, and in our case not in the usual formula of such occasions."

"I am glad," she replied, archly. "I hate all that is conventional. I hope you will keep your promise, my lord, whatever you have to communicate."

He chafed under the mocking tone of one so young and inexperienced.

"Nonsense, Lady Maud," he exclaimed, angrily. "It is unworthy of you as myself to use subterfuge. You must guess what I mean—to what subject I allude. And I," he added, bitterly, "I am an idiot not to plunge into it with all the florid falsehoods most men would use."

"And most women detect and dislike," replied the girl, calmly. "However, I will not vex you again. I am ready to listen in silence."

Was there over so provoking a little creature? Was ever an unfortunate suitor so exasperated into unbecoming and useless wrath that must be overmastered and crushed down?

"I will take your hint and go plainly to the point," he said, bitterly. "Lady Maud, I know that you have been informed of the bond, which was concluded without our consent—ay, even before your birth, by those whom we are bound to respect, and not to censure as they perhaps richly deserve—of the bond and its penalty," he added, in a lower tone.

Maud nerved herself now. She comprehended the test that was coming. She even guessed the

tone that would be taken and that she would perhaps be touched in the sorest point of a woman's nature.

Her resolve was made, firmly enough for one so young. The motives were as yet unsuspected even by those who knew her best.

Was it ambition, pique, generosity, affection for her nearest and dearest, tenderness or vanity? No one could divine save her own heart. The secret was faithfully and long to be kept.

"You deal in enigmas, my lord," she answered, with real or feigned archness in her smile that astonished and provoked Sholto's more earnest and deeply moved feelings. "Perhaps I do understand what you mean; but it is safer to speak plain English, lest I, in my ignorant folly, might make some blunder in my reply."

"You shall be obeyed, Lady Maud," he said, with a cold, withering courtesy in his bow. "It is, I dare say, due to your sex and rank to give you the formal homage of a proposal, which is, I presume, the real meaning of your words. In plain English, then," he went on, after a slight pause, during which he strove hard to overcome the contending passions that were agitating his very brain, "I ask you whether you are willing to fulfil your part of the contract entered into—to accept my hand and coronet, and become Viscountess Saville, with all that belongs to the position?"

It was a cold, icy proposal, better adapted to a princess of the blood, or to a mature and experienced woman, than to a young and lovely girl, with all the warm instincts of her age and nature coursing in her veins and animating her thoughts and affections.

Even Sholto himself felt as he looked up at the young face with a quick, furtive glance. He expected, perhaps hoped, to read anger, repulsion, disgust in its expression. But no! To his utter astonishment the only emotion that could be read in the girl's features was a calm, impassive satisfaction, mingled it might be with a touch of haughtiness that he had never seen in her gay mien since his arrival.

"You have spared me some trouble, my lord," she replied, at last. "You have not asked me any questions I might have found it difficult to answer. You never expressed yourself, or inquired about any such trifles as mutual regard, or taste or sympathy."

Sholto looked simply petrified at the cool superiority of that young, inexperienced creature. There was not girlish pique nor romantic spirit in the tone and manner. It was but a keen, polished sarcasm on himself, that was too well deserved.

"You are right, I suppose," he returned, nerving himself to the occasion with a difficulty that, strangely enough, was somewhat aggravated by the girl's self-possession. "I am no hypocrite, Lady Maud. I do not profess that I am drawn to you by spontaneous love to make this offer, nor do I for a moment expect that you will feel it for me. It is a mere matter of business and interest as yet," he went on, with increasing severity, as he remembered all the bondage he was undertaking, the self-mastery, the sacrifice of even the luxury of a hopeless and smothered passion.

"Am I to believe that you are content to do your part if I can make myself happy in mine?" she asked, in a more subdued tone than she had yet betrayed.

"I have every reason to be so, Lady Maud. And at any rate I will engage to behave as a man of honour and a gentleman should, in all that I can do to promote your happiness. You shall have no cause to complain of any want of care and consideration," he replied, with a rapid utterance, as if thankful to speak of some more satisfactory and easy subject.

"Of nothing except want of love and sympathy," she returned, calmly. "Well, perhaps that is not so essential. You can do without it, you say, why should not I?"

"Lady Maud, you are inexplicable," burst from his lips, with involuntary disgust and surprise.

"Perhaps I consider you are as bewildering," she said, quietly. "There we are equal."

"No, no, not so," he said, quickly. "Surely there is a wide difference between a man of my age and my experience of the world and you just fresh and bursting into womanhood. If I mistake not your friend would be less calmly unmoved, less resigned to such a fortune. Perhaps it is a matter of birth as well as nature," he went on, bitterly, as he thought regretfully of Laura de Fontane, and her strong passionate love and romance.

It might be, nevertheless, that there was a certain if unacknowledged charm in the reticent and most perplexing calmness of the peer's daughter.

His vanity as well as his admiration might well attract him to the mysterious, baffling girl, who certainly did not wear her sleeve with her heart and its inmost feelings printed for men to see.

But his impulses were rather to distrust and to disapprove all that Maud Dorrington could do or say or look. And he chose to believe the worst interpretation of her strange indifference to the worst insults her sex received.

Lady Maud was impervious to the implied taunt.

"Yes," she returned, coldly, "I agree with you, Lord Saville. There is an immense difference between us. Nay, I believe our ideas just now are entirely different; but I reply to the plain question you put to me. I do not see that it is necessary to do more."

"Shut up. Yes, hopelessly shut up."

So thought the Lord Saville, as he and his companion rode on in silence for some moments.

"You look subdued, annoyed, Lady Maud," he said, at last. "What can I hope or expect from a consent given so bitterly?"

"You must decide that for yourself, my lord," she replied, slightly urging on her steed. "I cannot supply everything even to an accepted suitor. Heart, trust, confidence, do not come in the category of what you requested. I decline such a hopeless task."

"But I may consider myself your accepted suitor," he asked, desperately.

She bowed her head with a calm assent that was more like thirty than seventeen.

And then the viscount took her hand in his with a constrained pressure, more like the clasp of pain than of love.

"It is well, and I thank you," he replied, in a subdued, choked voice.

But the next moment the hands of both were suddenly unclasped, and a faint cry escaped Maud's lips.

There was a shriek on the air that spoke of a wild terror, and, echoed back by a hoarse and agonized wail.

"Good Heavens! What has happened? That is Gwenda's voice!" exclaimed Maud, her face paling with terror to a colourless hue.

"Calm yourself, Lady Maud. I will soon ascertain the truth," said Lord Saville, perhaps not unthankful for the relief to the embarrassing scene.

And ere the girl could utter another word he put his horse to the gallop, and rushed off in the direction of the sounds they had heard.

Maud remained behind as if in a powerless catatonic for some moments.

"It is done," she murmured, "the worst is over. He hates me. What will be the end? Shall it be death, or life? Heaven only knows. And I have vowed myself to the task that is before me. The vow shall be fulfilled, and the conquest won. Ah," she added, slowly and solemnly, "the last penalty paid, while no human being shall guess the heart's secret, which I will bury in the grave."

She gave a deep, long sigh, and then entered off on the same road as the viscount had taken.

## CHAPTER XX.

Devouring famine, plague and war  
Death's servile emissaries are,  
Nor to thee alone confined.

He hath at will  
More quaint and subtle ways to kill;  
A smile or kiss, as he will use the art,  
Shall have the cunning skill to break a heart.

"Well, Laura, are you prepared to leave this gay city, and start on a homeward trip?" asked Count Albert, looking up from a paper that he had been attentively reading for some half hour or more.

The couple were sitting at breakfast, at least, at that meal which is more like the luncheon of English life than the early morning meal, whose name it bears.

Laura was as usual faultlessly dressed, and the skill of the modiste and the French maid was most skillfully exerted to hide at once the effects of time and, it might be of grief on her gorgeous beauty.

True, the period of life at which the countess had arrived was one which is most trying to women. The round softness of youth is gradually subsiding into a more hard and severe line, and the first lithe grace and brilliant freshness of early days is almost invisibly moulding and fading into a more mature sobriety of demeanour.

But with that fair enchantress of so many hearts this danger was at least strangely averted or deferred.

Those glorious soft Orient eyes, the peach bloom on the cheek seemed to defy time, and the becoming colours, the softening coiffure completed by art the beneficent gifts of nature.

She looked up with an appearance of languid indifference at the sound of her husband's voice, but his sharp eyes fancied there was not altogether such complete apathy as she would wish to manifest.

"Very well," she said, "I shall, of course, obey your wishes, whatever they may be. I have never resisted your will, as you well know, Albert."

"No," he replied. "We have got on very well, Laura, in most respects. You have been as handsome, and to me as well as I could possibly expect; and you have not thwarted and worried me more than, I suppose, is the way with the most pattern wives. And I, in my turn," he continued, "have indulged and humoured your every wish, so far as was possible."



She bowed her head.

"Yes, you have given me all I wished as to the luxury and splendour which surround us," was her reply.

But her glance round the room had little of pride or pleasure in it, but rather the weary languor of satiety.

"And," he went on, "I have certainly never been a jealous or distrustful husband, Laura. You have been a great deal admired, which pleased me rather than the reverse. I take it as a compliment to my taste in choosing you. Moreover," he continued, after a brief pause, and with a penetrating glance that might well throw her off her guard, "moreover, when young Saville was always at your side, and relieving me of any necessity to pay you the petits soins of a husband, I had no alarm. I could confide my honour, I believed, to your keeping, Laura; yes, even if I could not so completely trust my happiness and heart."

Laura's cheek was flushed scarlet for a moment; but it was rather with indignation than shame.

"You are right," she said, haughtily; "I had respect for myself, even had it been tested, which it never was," she added, emphatically.

"That is well, at any rate," he said. "Do you mean that Lord Saville never spoke any words that I might have objected to hear?"

"He never spoke one word injurious or insulting to your honour or mine," she replied. "That should be enough, and it is all I will say."

"Ah, well, I have really very little to fear on the subject," he rejoined, laughingly, "and for a very simple reason, that he is going to be married to a young and lovely heiress—so my interesting English paper informs me, Laura."

She did not blench in the most trifling degree, whatever her feelings might be at the news.

"I am not at all surprised, I fancied there was something of the kind on the tapis. What is the name?" she asked, after a moment's pause.

"That is not stated—there is merely the usual announcement, that a marriage is about to take place between the Viscount Saville and the only daughter of a peer who is not yet even presented, and will therefore make her debut as a bride, consequently she must be very young."

"No doubt," she replied, disregarding the pang which the emphasis on her rival's pre-eminence cost her.

"However, we shall soon see for ourselves," he resumed. "I intend, as I before said, to return to England now, Laura, at least, by a slow and prolonged tour, en route. It seems to me that it is at last time to see about Gwendolyn and arrange for her future life."

"Then she is not dead, as I have sometimes fancied?" inquired Laura, eagerly.

"Oh, dear, no. I have pretty certain information on that head," returned the count. "Let me see, she must be now nearly seventeen, as I think, or—perhaps scarcely that. You are not more than thirty-five yourself, and I know that her father did not marry till you were eighteen. Is it not so?"

"What use is there in reviving these unhappy memories, Albert?" exclaimed Laura, pushed as it seemed beyond her patience. "It signifies little whether Gwendolyn is a year older or younger. It is enough that she is of an age to be taken from tutelage, and—"

"And placed under our care, is that your idea, fair countess?" rejoined Albert, quietly. "It is not mine, I have no intentions of starting a new life and establishment, and adopting a felon's child to be brought out into the world as my own."

"Then what do you intend?" asked Laura, in a subdued voice.

"I intend to make some arrangement that will help her to gain her own living, if needful," he said. "If not, she can be placed in some safe and suitable obscurity, for the remainder of her life, and I have no doubt, will be extremely comfortable in her ignorance of her real misery."

Laura shrank back from the cynical laugh of the count.

"You say he is dead," she returned; "do you think he will not haunt me for thus breaking my last vow to him in his prison cell?"

"It appears to me that there is a great deal more justice in you haunting his last moment by the memory of his treachery and baseness to yourself," returned the count, sternly. "Harkye, Laura, it is very seldom that I express my feelings, far more rare that I lament the useless past. But it is none the less deep in my soul. Laura, your life has been marred, I might almost say polluted by the shadow of that early mistake of your youth, your mad preference, your devotion to that unworthy man. And for me," he went on, more fiercely, "I have been transformed into the thing I was not, or might have been saved from becoming. Yes, I would have bestowed

my whole heart's love, my very life on you. Now it is but an empty mockery of union and love."

The countess was silent, stunned perhaps at the unwonted outburst, perhaps with a vague sense how amply it was justified by the truth. But like the wand of an enchanter, or the transformation scene at a theatre, Count Albert's mood appeared to change.

The flush faded from his cheeks, and he retained all the calm cynicism of his usual demeanour.

"This is all very absurd, I daresay, Laura. But what I intend to convey to you is the utter and absurd folly and uselessness of any regrets for this unlucky girl. I am fully determined on that head. Now let us arrange more fully as to the plans I shall adopt for our return."

"Whatever you please, whatever you may wish," she said, languidly.

"They are very simple. I shall part for the time with this house and the furniture, for which I have already obtained a tenant," he replied. "We will then start off by easy stages home, and I intend to stay at Rome and Florence and Leghorn, and then cross to the South of France, and go as quietly and leisurely to the north of that country, pausing at the principal towns. Then, when we have been a little time in Paris, that will bring us about to the beginning of the London season, when, no doubt, our friend and his bride will appear in full glory. Will that please you, Laura?" he continued, still gazing intently on her face.

"I will be ready. When do you intend to start?" she asked, quietly.

"In about a fortnight. Meanwhile, I should wish you to attend especially to your health, which I do not think has been very good of late. You should see a physician, and no one can be better than Dr. Leonini in my judgment."

"Why? I have no ailment. Nothing to complain of or tell," she returned, in astonishment.

"That may be your opinion. It is not mine," he replied, "and I desire that you will permit this doctor to thoroughly examine and prescribe for you. I have no wish for you to fall ill on a journey without the comforts of home or any doctor that I know to attend you."

Laura would have laughed to scorn the strange idea had she dared. Her health had no physical drawback that she could name. It might be that the mental strain she had suffered would in a manner affect her looks and give a languor to her feelings and movements. But who could minister to that? Who could allay that brain feverishness that was her constant portion since Sholto's departure, or the sick pains at the heart, which gnawed on it like a serpent?

"I will go through the farce, if you choose," she said, "but really it is nothing short of an absurdity. I never remember being ill in my life—I mean really and seriously ill. But, of course, I cannot expect to be always exempt, only I hope that the ill-omened sight of a physician will not be a signal for illness."

"You are surely no such superstitious simpleton," he replied, lightly. "No, Laura, be matters what they may, whether you love or hate me, whether your heart is given elsewhere in defiance of your better feelings, I still look on you as my charge, my treasure, my bright star of life. Beside, I shall not rest," he continued, "till I have taken every precaution previous to this long and weary journey to preserve your health and beauty in their very zenith. And who can tell whether the Countess Albert de Fontaine will not outshine even the youthful charms of the Viscountess Saville?"

He rose as he spoke, pushed the table away, and, stooping down, kissed her brow with rather the air of a gallant lover than a long-wedded and somewhat matured husband.

"Why, your forehead burns, Laura," he said as he raised his head. "Most certainly you need all the skill and care of Leonini to thoroughly renovate you for the coming ordeal. He shall be summoned at once, and I shall obey his directions implicitly in making my arrangements."

Laura gave a half-mocking smile, but still her voice was gentle and resigned as she thanked the count for his attentions and care.

"Meriton, my boy, you have deserved well at my hands hitherto," said Count Albert as the page attached to his wife's person as her own constant attendant obeyed his summons. "Do you think you can be entrusted with a yet more delicate duty than has ever yet been demanded of you?"

The boy looked up firmly in his master's face. He was a slight, agile, gracefully formed lad, with a sharply cut face, and intellectual eyes and forehead all superior to his supposed station. He scarcely would have been taken for an English youth, to judge from his whole appearance and movements and manners, but his father had been a courier, and the boy had lived much abroad during his early days,

and finally been placed with an Italian gentleman in Naples, from whose service he had been transferred to that of the count.

"Yes," he said, "yes, I can, signor; I have never yet betrayed a trust, and you told me that if I was firm and true you would not only reward me but that the countess would be saved from trouble and danger! That is enough!"

"So you love your mistress, do you, Meriton?" asked the count.

"I worship her—she is so beautiful, she is like a queen," returned the boy, enthusiastically.

"That is well," replied the count; "but, my boy, the very affection you express may be the means of betraying you. Suppose she asked you for something that was contrary to my order, would you not be tempted to obey her, and thus make it hopeless for me to save her?"

Meriton paused for a moment to think, but then his mind seemed fully resolved.

"No, signor count, no. But if I had given my word, that is quite sufficient. Nothing would induce me to break my vowed promise."

The count gave a kind and gracious nod.

"Right, my lad, right," he said; "I can fully and confidently trust you after that declaration. Now, then, we fully understand each other, and all that I tell you to do will be in the most entire trust. In the first place, you will have to carry out the treatment that may be ordered by Doctor Leonini, who is even now with her—even if she is persuaded that it is an unnecessary performance."

"Doctor Leonini! Is she ill then?" cried the lad, eagerly.

"No, not ill, simply in somewhat delicate and shaken health," rejoined the count. "And it is my extreme anxiety and affection for her that gave me the wish for him to see her; in fact, he is with her now, he arrived while you were gone to the post office, my lad."

Meriton looked rather doubtful.

"Surely you will not let her travel if she is in delicate health?" he asked, anxiously.

"Certainly not—except under certain treatment, which you will carry out, my good fellow," he replied, "but, there, I hear your lady's bell. No doubt the doctor has just left her—go and bring him here at once," he continued, hastily.

Meriton rapidly disappeared.

And in a few moments more the count's door was opened and Dr. Leonini was ushered in. He was a dark, sallow man, with a complete Italian type of face, coal black hair, and glittering black eyes, that had a half-melancholy, half-restless look in their brilliant depths.

"Well, count, I have done as you desired, and examined your lady most minutely," he said, after the first greetings were over. "But I had some difficulty in extracting the truth from her with all my efforts."

"Well, what is your opinion on the whole, my dear sir?" asked the count, anxiously.

"Scarcely so decided as I usually form, and as I would like to report," he replied. "I do not doubt that the countess has extreme delicacy of the nervous system and a rather weak organization of the heart that needs much care. Otherwise—"

He stopped as he marked the rather baffling expression of the count's face, which warned him he was touching on tender ground.

"Otherwise?" repeated the count, inquiringly.

"Otherwise," continued the physician, "I should say that your lady has a very healthy constitution, so far as organic maladies are in question."

"Still," inquired the count, "I presume I do not err when I say that such a tendency as the countess possesses might be dangerous if there were any shock, or any absence of especial and tender care?"

"Possibly," continued the doctor; "but happily the countess has the requisite tenderness and luxury at her command. I therefore need be under no such apprehension."

"And what medicine would be most useful in such cases, my good friend?" asked the count. "You need not fear to trust me, as I was, in my earlier days, a dabbler in your chemical lore."

"Why, the truth is, that there are medicines I have found extremely useful in these nervous cases," replied the doctor, "but I confess I should be loth to use or trust them in any but the most careful and trustworthy hands, though they are not to be classed with actual poisons."

"You may perhaps allude to some of which I already know the names and uses, as I am no tyro in the science."

Doctor Leonini hesitated.

"It is scarcely within the province of my profession to make such a confidence, count. You are aware we are liable to heavy penalties for such want of caution."

"Yes, I have heard of that, ay, and of far more

strong cases, Doctor Leonini. I at this moment could tell you of one if not more such drugs that are in the possession of an English nobleman, who is at once much younger and certainly has far less experience of such matters than I have."

"May I ask the name, count?" inquired the physician.

"Hem! I hardly know whether that is quite to be allowed," said the count, smiling. "However, that is perhaps allowable where a man of your experience and your profession is in question. It is Lord Saville, who left here not long since, as you are aware, for England, where he is about to be married."

"I hope he is not going to practise on his wife," smiled the doctor, apparently little impressed with the important information.

The count shrugged his shoulders.

"If she is as precious to him as mine is to me, there will be little danger," he replied. "Doctor, if you could comprehend the almost foolish degree of my worship for her, you would not wonder that I am so anxious for the means of warding off any danger, when perhaps at some distance from so skilful a physician as yourself."

"Better a moderately clever one than an amateur," returned the doctor, shaking his head.

"Then, I see, as a last resource, I must confide to you a secret that would have been buried with me, except in such necessity as this," replied the count. "Doctor, listen to me—nay, lower still, for I would not even allow the walls to catch the sound of what I have to tell you."

The physician complied and bent his head till the count's lips were close to his ears.

The nobleman spoke for some few minutes in a low and subdued tone.

The doctor gazed about in terror at the secret thus confided to him when the words were at last finished.

"Are you certain—is it possible—have you any proof of this?" he asked.

"Too certain. Do you think I would have betrayed a doubtful fancy to you, when one so precious is concerned?" he asked.

"And you are really uneasy as to the result of this?"

"Hush, hush," interrupted the count; "I told you, my good sir, that I would not even let the winds of Heaven hear the miserable secret. Indeed, please Heaven, it shall never be known save by yourself. Now, I should think you will not hesitate to let me have the remedy I ask, on condition that it shall never be allowed to leave my possession and that of one other, whom I will bind by most stringent promises; and since Lord Saville has managed to obtain the same drug I cannot think it reasonable to refuse it to me, under such painful circumstances."

The physician shook his head doubtfully.

"There is some truth in what you say, count, still I assure you that, were you going to remain in Naples, I would cut my right hand off before I would permit it to pass from my laboratory to even your keeping. But, as it is, if you give me your solemn word as a man of honour and a gentleman only to use it as I prescribe, I will yield to your request, in, at any rate, a modified degree."

(To be continued.)

**RENDERING WOOD UNINFLAMMABLE.**—The late fire at the Pantechnicon gives interest to any invention having for its object the prevention of similar disasters. Experiments were recently made at Woolwich to test a process discovered by Dr. Thomas Jones for rendering wood uninflammable. The first experiment was with some shavings, which, after being soaked in the preparation, were thrown on a bright fire. Instead of blazing they were merely charred, without emitting flame. On a match being applied to a heap of prepared shavings they refused to ignite. A large pile of prepared wood, being saturated with paraffin, remained unburnt, although the oil on its surface gave forth fierce flames. When a similar test was applied to a heap of unprepared wood the greater part was consumed in a quarter of an hour. But the most crucial experiment was the last. A quantity of gunpowder, packed in a wrapper of prepared brown paper, was inserted in a cask previously saturated with Dr. Jones's solution. This barrel being turned on its end, paraffin was lighted at the top, with no effect either on the wood or enclosed powder. The barrel being reversed, lighted shavings were dropped upon the packet of powder, but they burnt out without causing any explosion. In fact, the powder, on being taken out and submitted to experiment, retained all its strength. Dr. Jones does not claim for his invention that it renders substances incombustible. All he maintains is, that by employing his process the progress of a fire would be greatly delayed, since substances saturated would give off no flame. The late Woolwich experiments prove that, under certain conditions, this

very desirable result can be attained. Until more extensive trial it is impossible to decide upon the exact merits of this invention, and we are therefore glad to see that the experiment will be repeated on a larger scale. Should these prove equally successful with the last, one influence leading to the rapid spread of fires will disappear. At one time the flames at the Pantechnicon threatened to seize Belgravia, although the building was completely detached. No one who saw the fiery tongues leaping over Lowndes-square will doubt the great importance of any invention claiming to prevent their omission.

## LOVE AND PRIDE.

THE last lingering rays of the setting sun were visible when Herbert Moncure descended the steps of a noble-looking mansion, and wended his way towards his club.

Rarely does the eye rest on a figure more prepossessing. It was one which, even in a crowd, would scarcely pass unnoticed. Yet, while his face was "very handsome" to the casual observer, a physiognomist would have read the features with considerable doubt as to the firm character of the man.

"Moncure! The very man I wish to see!" exclaimed a dandified fashionable, placing his hand on the shoulder of our hero. "Of course you attend the Henleys' to-night, as the escort of la belle St. Clair? By the way, how are you progressing in that quarter? Do you know that your name is linked with hers everywhere, and your marriage spoken of as a certainty?"

"Yes, Charlie, I know it, and I almost wish it could be true, for she is a grand creature. But, as I told you, if I do take upon myself the bonds of matrimony, I must win a fortune in figures as well as in beauty. Madame Moncure must have sufficient means to meet her own expenses, as, with my habits (and I do not care enough for any human being to change them), I have nothing to spare; and as to going to work, either mentally or physically, that is a thought too abominable to be entertained for a moment. Now you have the whole matter in a nutshell. Miss St. Clair has had every advantage that wealth can give, but she is only a niece of the old gentlemen, who, for fear of Mrs. Grundy, has given her all these advantages. In my opinion, his interest will cease with her marriage, his own children bearing off all of the property. But here we are at the club; let's go in and get a glass of sherry before we prepare for the ball."

That night, as usual, Moncure was a worshipper at the shrine of Miss St. Clair, who left the ball-room, where her beauty entitled her to rank as belle, giddy with delight.

The next morning, while the beautiful girl was trying to do justice to the steaming chocolate, French rolls and tempting viands that Celeste had brought to her, she received a message from her uncle, Mr. St. Clair, asking her to come to the library. She languidly descended the stairs, wondering what her uncle wished to see her about at that unusual hour.

The library, a large apartment containing six windows reaching to the floor, was carpeted with velvet, combining colours rich and warm; the east end of the room was filled with shelves loaded with their wealth of ancient and modern lore—poetry, sentiment, wit, and grave wisdom; works to suit every taste might be found beneath the heavy folds of damask which, falling from the ceiling, partially concealed them; damask also shaded the windows.

By a glowing grate, in a velvet-covered chair, sat Mr. St. Clair, who, having just dismissed the prim housekeeper, was now the only occupant of the room. His countenance was grave, almost stern, when in repose; but the smile with which he welcomed the entrance of his niece proved that beneath the cold exterior there was a heart generous and kind.

With the ready politeness of the true gentleman, he arose to place a chair beside his own for her; then with one arm thrown across the back of it, said:

"I am sorry to distress you this morning, my dear, for I know that you are weary; but Dr. Lacy is so peremptory in his commands that I feel it a duty to obey. You know that for some time I have feared the disease which is hereditary in my family; yesterday, feeling worse than usual, I sent for the doctor and submitted my lungs to a thorough examination. He says that as yet my affection is only bronchial attended by nervous prostration; that an entire change of scene, and constant travelling for six months or a year, are my only hope. I wished to know whether you would be willing to accompany me, for of course it would add much to my enjoy-

ment to have you do so, and it would afford you pleasure to visit the childhood's home of your mother and myself. But perhaps the ties you have recently formed would render a long absence painful; if so, do not go."

For a moment the long, dark lashes swept the pale cheek, a shade of thoughtfulness rested upon the fair brow, and, in a clear, sweet voice, she replied:

"Thank you, dear uncle, I shall be delighted to go. When do you start?"

"On Thursday; this is Tuesday. I am very glad, my dear child, that you are willing to accompany me; but what will Herbert say?"

Again the fair brow was shadowed, and the tone in reply very sad.

"I deserve no praise for my compliance with your wishes. The 'tour' has been my ambition from early girlhood; and then it is ever a happiness to be with you, my guardian. Besides, I am anxious to test the constancy of Mr. Moncure. It pains me to acknowledge it, but at times I cannot feel satisfied in reference to his firmness of character."

"I, too, have had fears, having heard through undoubted authority that he vows that he must marry an heiress, if he marries at all. We will try the test; it can do no harm, and in the meantime we will keep secret the fact that I have made my will largely in your favour."

The news that Miss St. Clair contemplated a prolonged trip was telegraphed among her "five hundred friends," and, on Wednesday evening, her room echoed on every side with words of kind wishes and farewell.

Among the last to leave was Florence Randolph, Maude's most cherished friend. A moment of utter silence, hand clasped in hand, and then they parted—to meet, when again?

Herbert Moncure lingered for a few last words.

"Maude, must you go?" he asked, as he drew her to a crimson divan.

"Yes; uncle has been a father to me, and I cannot let him go alone; and, besides, it will give me sad pleasure to visit the childhood's home of my angel mother."

"Nor even to detain you by my side would I be willing to deprive you of this sweet privilege. Maude, my darling, is this not another link in the golden chain of love which binds us together? It has been the sad fate of each of us never to have known the tender care of a mother. Had my mother's gentle hand, guided me through youth, as a man I might have been far different. To you I would fain commit the task. Every tone, word and glance of mine must betray my devotion to you. Can you trust me sufficiently to promise that when you return you will give your happiness into my keeping?"

The promise was given, and the next morning Maude bade adieu to her betrothed without one doubt as to his constancy.

"MY DEAR FLORENCE—I can scarcely realize that two months have, like an echo, gone, since I felt the warm pressure of your hand at parting. Would that you were here, that this stupid pen and paper might be thrown aside, and, as in days of long ago, when careless school-girls, we might talk of the beauties around us—beauties far beyond any language of mine to describe, for we are now gazing upon the sunny skies, inhaling the balmy breezes of fair Italia. Do you remember how much we used to talk of this brilliant clime, and what pictures our fancy drew of the life we would lead here?"

"The reality has been very different to me. Dear uncle is very feeble. It seems to me such a mistaken idea to send invalids far away from home and kindred in search of strength; at least, when one is advanced in life, and can take but little interest in the pleasures of the hour. Uncle is very patient, but quiet to despondency, and now his cough is almost constant. I hear him calling me now; so, dear Florence, good-bye. These good-byes are sad, whether written or spoken."

"Please write soon to one who needs love and sympathy."

MAUDE.

As soon as Florence finished reading Maude's letter she handed it to her mother, a gentle, blue-eyed matron, begging her to read it at once, as she had a question to ask her.

"Well, my daughter, what is it? You look as if it were a matter of vast importance."

"And it is, mother. I am much perplexed to know how to act. You know that Maude and Mr. Moncure are engaged, and yet his recent devotion to that dowdy Miss Brown is a common topic; now, ought I to tell Maude?"

"I can see no doubt in the matter. It is a positive duty that you owe to your friend. While I make some calls you will be alone, and can write until Dr. Lacy makes his appearance."

A rosy flush suffused the fair brow at mention of this name, and a sweet smile wreathing the ruby



lips gave token that no unpleasant feeling caused the emotion.

Scarcely had Mrs. Randolph left the house when a ring of the door-bell was followed by the entrance of the doctor.

"Always welcome, doctor," said Florence, "but more than usually so this morning. Do you agree with mother in thinking it my duty to tell Maude of the questionable manner in which Mr. Moncure is acting?"

"She should certainly be informed, Miss Florence, yet I dread the effect on her. She has decided symptoms of heart-disease, and any shock may prove fatal; still, she must know it some time, and I am sure that you will be as gentle as possible."

"Stella, I do not believe one word of it! Herbert Moncure has no more idea of marrying you than he has of flying to Italy, nor half so much, for his idol is there. Look in the glass and give your vanity a toss down stairs, for, believe me, the man who once admired Maude St. Clair would never turn to look at you."

"I know that he doesn't love me, but he did ask me to marry him," said the charming Stella Brown. "I like Tom Smith a great deal the most, but I told Mr. Moncure yes, just to spite Maude. I've never forgiven her haughty airs at school."

"Airs or not, she is a splendid woman. But do as you please; I will not interfere," said the affectionate brother, slamming the door and banging the gate; as was his usual mode of exit when leaving home.

"DEAR FLORENCE—Your letter, so fraught with interest to me, has just been read; and, while I would thank you for the spirit of love and friendship which guided your pen in writing, my heart-deaths echo no responsive strain of sadness to its contents."

"The cup of sorrow that my lips are now draining is all too full to admit a thought of further joy or grief. He to whom from almost babyhood I have turned for sympathy and protection, to whom I have given the love of a child because he was to me all that a parent could be, he, too, is to be taken from me, and then—oh, I cannot, cannot endure the future! I cannot, will not, say, 'Thy will be done!' Why had I a heart if all it loves must either change or die? If I could only get the dear one home, where he so yearns to be!"

"This may be my last letter. Your suffering, MAUDE,"  
Ere Maude had sealed her letter she was summoned to the bedside of her uncle, to hear his last words of affectionate farewell. Only a few, breathed with a gentle, loving smile; then his eyes closed as if to sleep. All suffering over, there were a few hours of rest, followed by a brief struggle; and, as the clear peal of the midnight hour sounded, it seemed to the desolate mourner as if tolling a knell for the departed.

After an absence of six months Maude was again at home; but how drear and desolate seemed the familiar rooms! The morning after her return she was sitting in the library, the favourite sanctum of her uncle, thinking of him, when a servant entered to announce Mr. Moncure.

"Pardon me, Miss Maude; perhaps I should not have intruded; but I could not control my impatience to see you."

Then, taking her hand with a gentle pressure, Herbert drew her to a sofa. The same old manner, unchanged in word or tone, could it be that he was heartless?

Maude withdrew her hand and took the seat designated, unable to utter a word; a moment, and the proud spirit conquered. Her grief for wasted affection was forgotten in the remembrance that the man beside her was unworthy of the wealth of love she had bestowed upon him, and, cost what it might, she would act as became her pride and station.

As pale, yet firm, as a marble statue, she turned and looked at her companion, whose eye fell beneath her gaze.

"What is the matter, Maude? Have you really changed, or is it my fancy?"

In reply she drew toward her a rosewood writing-desk, and taking from it a letter, handed it to him, saying:

"Do you recognize this?"

Her eyes did not move from his countenance, and she felt sure that she detected, in the sudden start and flushed brow with which he received it confirmation of her worst fears; and yet how she loved him, even then! Such is woman's heart.

At last, with his gaze still fixed on the document in his hand, Herbert spoke.

"I confess," he said, "that the penmanship is similar to mine; but, Miss Maude, you have known me better, perhaps, than any one else in the wide

world has known me; have you ever heard me express a sentiment that in the slightest degree resembled those contained here? Had such feelings been natural to me, could I have veiled them always? Oh, Maude, must I stoop to deny such a charge? Will you not trust me now, as in lang ago?"

The tone was persuasive, recalling sweet memories of other days, and, as the girl listened, she felt he could not be untrue, however appearances spoke against him.

"Oh, Herbert! I knew that you could not be false, and still I yielded to my stubborn pride. Truly it is my besetting sin. Can you forgive me? The letter was sent to me by Stella Brown, enclosed with a note from herself, saying that you had addressed her during my absence, but upon learning that my uncle had made me his heiress you had abandoned her. This letter, addressed to your most intimate friend, Mr. Gray, making the same assertion, seemed to leave no room for a doubt. Now, dear Herbert, tell me with your own lips that those reports originated with our enemies, and had no foundation, and I promise to doubt no more."

"It is the work of an enemy, but with truth to back it!" exclaimed a shrill female voice.

"Miss Brown!" said Maude and Herbert in a breath.

"Yes, Miss Brown," repeated the intruder. "Miss Brown, who came to interrupt this pretty love scene." Then, turning to Maude, she said: "I expected to find you alone, and I took the liberty of coming up; hearing the voice of this gentleman, I listened to hear what he had to say for himself." Then, to him: "Did you have the face to deny being the author of that letter, which you dropped in my parlour, or that you asked me to be your wife?"

Maude listened eagerly for the reply which came not. The man was compelled to acknowledge his guilt, and Miss Brown was satisfied. Her mean, petty attempt at revenge had so far succeeded, and, with a triumphant sneer, she bade them "good morning."

The silence which followed her departure was broken by Herbert. He said that with all truth he could assert that Maude alone had won his love; that her affection was more to him than the wealth of the Indies; that this very devotion made him hesitate to place her in a position different from the one in which she had been educated.

The tone which answered his appeal had naught in it of scorn or anger. Maude said that she pitied more than blamed; that whatever he had been, she believed him to be sincere now; but her trust in his firmness was shaken, and they could only be friends in the future.

"Do not interrupt me," she continued, "until you fully understand my ideas on this subject. The man I marry must be as firm as adamant in the right, with energy and perseverance that will contend with and conquer difficulties, turning neither to the right nor to the left when the path of duty has been decided upon. I acknowledge that I love you, Herbert, and to you as to a brother I will ever turn for counsel and sympathy; but my mind would never yield to yours; hence, I could never be your wife."

He saw that all words were useless then, but mentally resolving that she should yield, he bowed respectfully, almost humbly, as if in compliance with her wishes, and the next moment she was alone.

An hour later the old housekeeper, who still held her position, was startled out of her usual primness by finding Maude upon the library floor, one hand clasped to her heart, and entirely unconscious. Dr. Lacy speedily obeyed the hasty summons, succeeded in reviving his patient, administered a soothing mixture which produced a sweet, natural sleep, then, enjoying perfect quiet, he left her, directing his steps toward Mrs. Randolph's.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed Florence as she saw his grave face.

"I have just come from Maude, who is very ill. Will you go to her? Much depends on cheerful society and freedom from all excitement. In a quiet, uneventful life she may linger for years; but any shock will in all probability prove fatal."

In a few weeks Maude's health seemed entirely restored. If she suffered, no one knew it, for she never complained, and her spirits, if less gay, were more evenly cheerful. If less admired in the circle which had claimed her for its leader, she was more beloved.

Herbert Moncure attended her everywhere, and no one credited the rumour that she had discarded him, nor did she believe that she would remain firm in her resolution.

Again the tiny silver bell summoned "Celeste" to array her mistress for the festive scene—the marriage of her friends, Florence and Dr. Lacy. In consideration of her mourning, Maude had chosen a dress of

plain white, with no ornament except the favourite jasmine which she invariably wore.

Herbert was her escort, and, as they passed, among the guests, many predicted that they would soon follow the example of the doctor and Florence Randolph.

"Shall we, Maude?" asked Herbert, in a low tone, as he caught one of these whispers.

Her cheek rivalled her dress in whiteness as she replied:

"Never! You have your answer at once and for ever!"

Another moment, and but for his protecting arm she would have fallen. He bore her through the crowd to the verandah, where the cool night breeze might fan her pallid brow. Gradually and quietly the people who, a few moments since, had been so gay, stole a glance at the unconscious form, bade adieu to their hostess, and wended their way homeward, to wonder, pity or blame, as the disposition or mood prompted.

Dr. Lacy had called in other physicians, and all that the profession could do had been done, but as yet without effect. Maude gave no visible sign of life save an occasional spasmodic breath.

Two hours passed thus in intense anxiety to the watchers; then the long, drooping lashes trembled, and the large dark eyes, so beautiful even now, unclosed and turned toward Herbert, who had not left her for an instant. He bent low to catch the words that she seemed to breathe rather than utter.

"It was pride—I loved—you all the—while—my darling." And, with this word upon her lips, she died.  
B. D.

## SCIENCE.

THE combustion of one pound of coal in one minute is productive of a force equal to the work of three hundred horses during the same time.

NEW SAFETY LOCK.—Prokop, of Graz, has constructed a lock on a new principle, which he claims renders it proof against picking or copying the key. The peculiarity, as gathered from a condensed description, consists in a keyhole curved upward instead of straight, with a corresponding compound curved key.

HEATING APPARATUS FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES.—A new form of heating apparatus, intended to warm comparatively small quantities of water at a time, has recently been patented by Mr. Strode. A vertical chimney is arranged over a set of Bunsen burners. This chimney consists of an inner and outer cylinder, and in the jacket thus formed a current of water is allowed to flow, taking up the heat as it goes from the heated surface of the inner cylinder. The water is admitted cold at the bottom, and discharged at the top heated. The invention is intended for use in positions where a complete heating apparatus for hot water supply with cisterns, etc., cannot be constructed.

DETERIORATION OF COALS.—That coals lose considerably in value by exposure to the weather is well known, but few, probably, are aware of the extent of the damage. Dr. Varentruss has ascertained a loss of more than one-third in the weight of a sample of coal exposed for some time to the air, and he states that the quality of the coal had undergone a still greater deterioration. The loss is set down as due to a slow combustion of the volatile elements of the coal, which gradually diminish in amount, whilst the proportion of carbon, ash, and sulphur are increased. In some experiments made the gas furnished diminished 45 per cent., and the heating power 47 per cent., in a coal which had been exposed, and the same coal under shelter lost only 25 per cent. as a gas generator, and 10 per cent. as a heat producer. Anthracite, as might be expected, suffers least from exposure to the atmosphere, and the bituminous coals are those which lose most.

NEW FOSSIL MAN.—A third skeleton of a troglodyte has been discovered by M. Riviere in the caves of Mentone. This new skeleton, judging from the various and numerous implements by which it was surrounded, lived at an epoch far more remote than that assigned to the skeleton now in the Museum of Paris. The warlike instruments and objects found with them, though composed of flint and bone, are not polished. They are only sharpened, and by their coarse execution appear to belong to the palæolithic age. On the upper part of the remains was a large number of small shells, each pierced for stringing as a collar or bracelet. No pottery nor any bronze object was found. Our readers may recollect that the first skeleton found in the same neighbourhood, on the bank of a railway cutting on the sea margin, appeared to have been crushed by a fall of rock.

TROUT IN AN ARABIAN WELL.—Mr. Bard, the agent of the California Petroleum Company, at San Buenaventura, was lately engaged in constructing a wharf at a point south-east of that place. Waiting

water to supply this wharf, he commenced sinking an artesian well on the sea beach, not 5 feet from high water mark. At the depth of 143 feet a strong flow of water was obtained, which spouted forth to a height of 80 feet. It was controlled with a "goose neck," and utilized. One day, while the agent was absent, the men round the well noticed fish in the waste water. On his return they called his attention to the fact, and on examination the well was found to be filled with young trout, thousands of them being thrown out at every jet. These trout were all the same size (about two inches long) and perfectly developed. The eyes were found perfect. Now there is no stream nearer than the Santa Clara river, several miles distant. Could these fish then, it is asked, have come from its head waters by some subterranean outlet? There are no trout in the lower portions of the stream. The temperature of the well water is 64 deg. Fah.

**A SEWING MACHINE ENGINE.**—There is probably no field that presents more instances of simple and apparently perfect mechanical construction than that of steam engines. I recently saw an exceedingly simple oscillating engine. It consisted of scarcely more than a cylinder of about 2 by 1½ inches, clamped to one of the rear corners of an ordinary sewing machine table; the clamp serving also as a rest for the trunnions of the cylinder, the engine being connected by a belt to the upper pulley of the sewing machine. The oscillation of the cylinder caused the alternate admission and discharge of steam, the steam being supplied through a quarter inch flexible tube. The boiler was about the size of an ordinary one gallon milk can, and could be placed in any convenient out-of-the-way place, in the room or out of it; the vertical tubes of the boiler were made of extremely thin brass, and braced within with a spiral wire. I know nothing as to the success of this device; but it would be difficult, I think, to get up anything more simple for the purpose, in the line of steam engine manufacture. Some cheap power, either steam, air, or something else for working the sewing machine for family use, is one of the greatest needs of the time; and inventors who have the subject in hand should bear in mind that, in order to succeed, their devices must be cheap, durable, and inexpensive to run. To ensure the first of these qualities, the device must be very simple; to ensure the second, it must receive the very best material workmanship.—F. G. W.

**IMPROVED COMPOUND MACHINE ENGINE.**—The principle of the "compound" steam engine, from which so much good and economical work has of late years been obtained, is that it has both a high and low pressure cylinder or cylinders, and that the steam which has done duty in the former is made to do duty also in the latter, before it is suffered to escape. The compound engine was first patented in the year 1804; when the cylinders were placed in a vertical line, one above the other, and were worked by a single crank. Since that time a great many experiments have been made in relation to the subject, and almost every conceivable combination of cranks and cylinders has been tried; but the accepted type at present is the two cylinder engine, with the cylinders either vertical or side by side. The former construction, with a single crank, is still employed almost precisely to the principles laid down seventy years ago. It now appears that, if the invention had been earlier appreciated at its true value, many millions of tons of fuel, and many hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling could have been saved. The present price of fuel is so high, and its unnecessary consumption is so much to be condemned, on account of the influence which the coal supply exerts over the cost of iron and of many other commodities, that shipowners will often find it necessary to make quickness of passage subordinate to other considerations, and will be forced to inquire how they may safely convey the largest cargoes from port to port at the best paying speed, and with the least expenditure of coal and stores, rather than how they may attain the highest rate of speed without reference to its cost.

**DR. VOGEL'S PHOTOGRAPHIC RESEARCHES.**—Dr. Vogel has discovered that a sensitive collodion film of iodide of silver, when covered with some colouring matter which obstructs certain rays of light and does not interfere with other rays, becomes sensitive to those other rays, that is, those rays which are obstructed act photographically upon that film, just in proportion as they are obstructed. If the yellow rays are stopped, then the film becomes sensitive to yellow light, and yellow objects, which have heretofore been considered non-actinic, can thus be photographed as easily as blue objects have been. If this be so, then it is one of the most important discoveries that have been made in photography since the discovery of that art. It will enable us to depict objects of all colours, the inability to do which has been a great stumbling-block in the way of

photography. It is needless to mention the numerous ways in which it may be applied: suffices it to say that heretofore only one of the four primary colours has been considered to be actinic, that is, the blue. As to the theory of the above, there are two theories regarding the action of light on the sensitive film, one called the chemical, the other the physical theory. In the first, it is claimed that the reduction of the silver is done while the light is acting upon the film. In the second, it is claimed that a tremulous or vibratory motion is communicated to the film by the vibrations of light; and that when the developing solution is applied, the reduction takes place. In either case, it is the vibration of the light that does the work. The reason why iodide of silver is more sensitive to the blue ray is, it is thought, that the wave length of that ray coincides more nearly with the size of the particles of the iodide of silver, thereby disturbing or tearing them apart more. If a sensitized iodide of silver film be held before white light, it will be seen that the only colour apparent is the orange; and that blue objects appear black when viewed through it, showing that the blue rays are all obstructed. That film is therefore sensitive to blue light. Again, suppose we give that film a blue colour, then the orange or yellow rays are stopped. As action and reaction are equal, the amount of resistance exerted by the film is equal to the amount of light stopped; and the ray which is then most obstructed has the greatest action on the film. Taking this view of the matter, it seems quite reasonable that any ray may be made actinic.—D. C. O.

#### A NEW METHOD OF DETERMINING THE SUN'S DISTANCE.

The method consists in determining the parallax of one of the exterior planets when in opposition, not by micrometrical measurements of its distance from neighbouring stars, but by noting the exact moment at which it may occult a given star and the duration of the occultation (provided such a phenomenon takes place). Theoretically, this is perhaps the most accurate of all methods, but there seems to exist, at first sight, an insuperable objection to its practicality; namely, the apparent impossibility of noting the exact instant of the disappearance and reappearance of the star. If we can get over this difficulty, nothing will stand in the way of a successful application of this method to determine the sun's distance. And here the spectroscopic comes to our aid, and affords us the means of conquering this difficulty most completely.

Suppose, just previous to the expected disappearance of the star behind the body of the planet, the spectrum of the two be brought into the field (the star being at that time of course very close to the edge of the planet's disc). We shall evidently have the spectrum of the star superposed on that of the planet, the characteristic stellar lines appearing as well as the planetary ones. This double spectrum will continue visible in the field of view so long as the star's light reaches the observer, but the instant its light is cut off by the advancing disc of the planet, at that instant will the stellar spectrum vanish. However slow the apparent motion of the planet, and however dubious the time of the star's disappearance, as determined by telescopic observation, it will be seen that the result obtainable by this method of observation must be most rigorously exact.

The only doubt as to the value appears to be the infrequency of the phenomenon. This, of course, depends entirely on the minimum brightness of the star compared to the planet, necessary to bring out its spectrum at the same time as that of the planet with the required distinctness. On the whole, Saturn would seem to be the planet most favourably situated for the occurrence of this phenomenon, as he has a considerable apparent diameter, while his being much less bright than Jupiter or Mars in opposition would allow of the use of much smaller stars than these two planets—his very slow motion also being a considerable advantage. By knowing previously, approximately, the portion of the planetary disc which will first occult the star, it would be easy to shut out a great portion of the light of the planet, and observe the spectrum only of that portion of the disk behind which the star would disappear. By an arrangement of this nature, it is believed that stars down to the fifth, or even the sixth, magnitudes might be very well used for this purpose with either of the three above-mentioned planets; and occultations of stars of these magnitudes cannot be very infrequent.

**HENRY THE EIGHTH IN HIS YOUTH.**—The Court still wore a festive air; and no one in the Palace gave much thought to either Anaboe and his Gracian Reform, or Catharine and her great appeal. Gentlemen dressed in white put green branches in their hats, and stood around the butts while Henry fired his

bolts. No archer in his guard could bend a stronger bow, nor shoot a greater length than Catherine's husband. Henry and two companions challenged all the world to stand at barriers, to cast the eight-foot lance, to fight with a two-handed sword. Some knights took up the glove, but Henry and his men received the chief applause. Such deeds delighted soldiers, who desired to see their master give his mind to warlike sports. But he was no less busy and successful in the arts of peace. His day was spent in shooting, singing, casting of the bars, and playing on the flute. An hour was given to wrestling in the morning; another hour was given to setting music in the afternoon. A dance at night was followed by an early mass, in both of which he bore an author's part. For pictures he displayed an early love, and he collected jewellery and armour of the finest workmanship from distant lands. Such tastes were grateful to the Churchmen, who desired to see their master busy with the arts of peace.—Mr. Dixon's "History of Two Queens." Vol. III.

A suggestion has been made that as a substitute for the income-tax, the present receipt stamp of 1d. value be imperative in all transactions involving the payment of sums of 2s. to 10s.; and that every additional 10s. or fraction of 10s. shall require a further 1d. stamp. This system would, the writer asserts, realize a larger sum than the present income-tax.

**FRATERNITY.**—True friendship can only be moulded by the experience of time. The attractive face, the winning tongue, or the strong need of some passer-by, is not the permanent test of the union of hearts. A thousand transitory friends meet us along the crowded thoroughfare of life; but when we come to try their durability in the sieve of experience, alas, how many fall through, and of the few that remain how often are we prone to say,—"And thou too, Brutus?" But such is the battle waged between our better natures and the penalty of sin, and the blame rests with us all.—R. H. F.

**"TOO THIN."**—In Shakespeare's time the word wench was used to designate a pretty girl. But the word got into bad company, and finally degenerated into an opprobrious epithet. In this way the word became obsolete, until now it is rarely used in respectable literature. This is a fair illustration of the manner in which some of our most forcible words have almost disappeared from the literature produced by our best writers. There are certain combinations of the old Saxon dialect, the language of our childhood, which will express meaning with a power of condensation that cannot be equalled by the use of long Latin words. Shakespeare seems to have known that to bring before the mind vividly the largest amount of meaning by the use of few words was a high art.

**RHEUMATIC GOUT.**—Take of the common broom (Genista scoparia), garden lettuce (Lactuca sativa), and centaury (Chironia centaurium), one ounce each of the dry herb; gently simmer in two pints of water for twenty minutes, strain, and take of the cold decoction a wineglassful every four hours. Instead of using tea or coffee with the meals, drink freely of an infusion of the queen of the meadow or meadow sweet (Eupatorium purpurum), or a strong tea of the common apple. In addition to the above, strong fomentations of mugwort (Artemisia vulgaris) and wormwood (A. absinthium) on going to bed, will be found very beneficial. A Hument may be used during the day, made as follows:—Tincture of Cayenne, 1℥ss, tincture of opium, 1℥r, oil of rosemary, 1℥i, olive oil, 2℥r.

**DO EVERYTHING WELL.**—It is the result of practical everyday experience that steady attention to matters of detail lies at the root of human progress, and that diligence, above all, is the mother of good luck. Accuracy also is of much importance, and an invariable mark of good training in a man—accuracy in observation, accuracy in speech, accuracy in the transaction of affairs. What is done in business must be done well, for it is better to accomplish perfectly a small amount of work than to half do ten times as much. Yet in business affairs it is the manner in which even small matters are transacted that often decide men for or against you. With virtue, capacity, and good conduct in other respects, the person who is habitually inaccurate cannot be trusted; his work has to be gone over again, and he thus causes annoyance, vexation and trouble.

**ADULTERATED BEER.**—When the Intoxicating Liquors Act of 1872 came into operation the brewers strongly objected to a clause which condemned salt as a "deleterious article," and prohibited its admixture with liquor sold to the public. The representatives of the trade urged that a certain quantity of salt was necessary to the production of palatable beer, and eventually obtained the concession that fifty grains might be used to a gallon of malt liquor. Few beer drinkers would be disposed to object to the introduction of salt in such a quantity. It is, however, perfectly well known that adulterated



beer often contains twice or thrice the amount sanctioned. The superintendent of the Inland Revenue Laboratory lately reported on samples of beer which he had examined, from which it appears that grains of paradise, liquorice, and sugar are largely used as adulterants. What becomes of all the cocculus indicus imported into this country? The stocks for the month ending on the 31st of last month were 1,066 bags, and the deliveries 47 bags. Is there any legitimate use for the same? We say certainly not; and have no hesitation in affirming that a very large portion of it is put into malt liquor to give it strength and headiness. A viler agent could not well be introduced into beer than the berry, the stupefying effects of which are so well known that it is frequently used to kill fish and birds.

#### "TAKE THE OTHER HAND."

We cannot too much admire the beauty and truth of that philosophy which determines to make the best of it, however difficult and tiresome duty may be. Such a spirit in children is attractive indeed, and a powerful lesson to many who are older.

On a lovely day in the commencement of spring, a young lady, who had been anxiously watching for some weeks by the bedside of her mother, went out to take a little exercise and enjoy the fresh air, for her heart was full of anxiety and sorrow. After strolling some distance she came to a ropewalk, and, being familiar to the place, she entered. At the end of the building she saw a little boy turning a large wheel. Thinking this too laborious employment for such a mere child, she said to him as she approached:

"Who sent you to this place?"  
 "Nobody, ma'am; I came myself."  
 "Do you get pay for your labour?"  
 "Indeed I do; I get ninepence a day."  
 "What do you do with the money?"  
 "Oh, mother gets it all."  
 "You give nothing to father, then?"  
 "I have no father, ma'am."  
 "Do you like this kind of work?"  
 "Oh, well enough; but if I did not like it I should still do it, that I might get the money for mother."  
 "How long do you work in the day?"  
 "From nine to twelve in the morning, and from two till five in the afternoon."  
 "How old are you?"  
 "Fourteen."  
 "Do you get tired of turning this great wheel?"  
 "Yes, sometimes, ma'am."  
 "And what do you do then?"  
 "Why, I take the other hand."  
 The lady gave him a piece of money.  
 "Is this for mother?" asked the well-pleased archer.

"No, no; it is for yourself, because you are a good little boy."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am," returned he, smiling; "mother will be glad."

The young lady departed, and returned home, strengthened in her devotion to duty, and instructed in true practical philosophy by the words and example of a mere child.

"The next time duty seems hard to me," she said to herself, "I will imitate this little boy, and take the other hand."

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS the Prince of Wales has commanded Mr. Edwin Ward, of Wigmore Street, to mount the Russian bear shot by His Royal Highness in Russia on Feb. 17; also several other trophies, such as heads of wild boars and elk.

THOROUGHNESS.—Nothing must be slurred over; nothing left to chance; nothing be taken on supposition. Your whole energy must be thrown into your work, whatever it may be. All your thoughts must be concentrated on it. Your labour must be given to it unsparingly. You must grudge neither time nor fatigue. You must let nothing connected with it, no matter how small, escape your notice.

A BOON TO OLD SOLDIERS.—A Royal warrant has been issued, being the first official act of the new Secretary of State for War, granting pensions, not exceeding 1s. 6d. per diem, to men discharged without pensions who have served in the army during (or prior to) the campaigns of 1815, and who are now living without settled or sufficient means of support, and are unable, through wounds or infirmity, to support themselves.

It is not generally known that in the late fire at the Pantheon there was presumably destroyed an interesting relic of King Charles I., in fact, a shirt he wore on the day of his execution. Handed down as an heirloom, this historical memento seems to have found its last resting place in one of the doomed rooms of the Pantheon, owing to a difference of opinion amongst some family relatives as to its proper ownership. It was stored there to

await "the issue of events" by litigation or otherwise. The story goes that the ill-fated monarch, fearing that any symptom of shivering on his part on the scaffold might be attributed to cowardice, held by many to be foreign to his nature, bade his valet array him in two shirts on the fatal morn. The other shirt is, I believe, highly prized by another family, but in any case it is a matter for regret that an historical relic should have thus perished ignobly.

#### WHAT MRS. VANE HEARD.

THE WIDOW VANE, with the long streamers of her coquettish cap flying in the summer morning wind, stopped short in her run across the green square which divided her pretty cottage from the more stately home of her neighbours, the Grays, and ascending the steps with soft stealthiness, inclined her shapely ear to catch, if she might, some key-word to the stormy altercation going on within. Prone upon the floor of the verandah outside the pleasant breakfast-room lay the little daughter of the house crying lustily with grief and terror, responding to the widow's whispered "Hush-h," with frantic cries of "Papa! papa!" and, unsatisfied with this explanation of her childish woe, wailing piteously, "Ma—ma—mamma!" and then, as if despairing of ever making her great calamity intelligible to the stony woman, breaking into a fresh succession of sobs, which only motherly sympathy could check and calm. And of this the widow had not any just now in her maternally bosom, but only an insatiable, overmastering curiosity.

"I—ought to know—cannot afford—told you—if you love—so—should not—married me," came indistinctly and disjointedly from the evidently excited and indignant gentleman of the matrimonial firm of Gray and Co.

The response, drowned in tears and choked with sobs, was even less connected and more uncertain as to point; but the eager and sharpened sense of the eavesdropper picked out such suggestive words and phrases as:

"Cruel—if I had known—unkind—nothing more of you—would not care—love me—and go away."

Then the voice of Alexander Gray, attorney, broke again into bits and fragments of ominous meaning, at least to the breathless listener outside, who knew how to piece together and make complete and satisfactory sense of such broken parts of speech as those which struck like epigrams of an exploding shell upon the sensitive tympanum of her ear.

"Cannot stand—disgrace—George Duncan—"

The widow sniffed like a war-horse that scents the battle afar, and, warned by a movement within, threw up her head, pursed her lips, and, looking innocently wise, sprang down the steps with the agility and lightness of a cat, and scampered away across the greensward to her haunt, like a spider to her fastness after she has entailed the unwary fly in her web.

At the same moment a pretty brown-haired, rose-lipped woman, with a suspicious redness about the eyes, came running out on the flower-illuminated verandah from which the widow had just disappeared, and catching up the weeping child in her arms began to fondle and kiss and soothe her with love's soft magnetism; and following her close, a tall, full-bearded, blundering, flushed, excited man, who gathered both woman and child in his embrace and kissed them tenderly and penitently on cheek and lip.

"How ridiculous!" said the little woman, between laughing and crying, but with a look in her uplifted eyes that settled all conjugal differences with a swiftness and sweetness and sureness unattained by argument, however profound and prolonged, for in it the defaulter read a love unflinching, forgiving and true, and, if sometimes wayward and petulant, quick to confess and atone.

"My precious little wife!" ejaculated Alexander Gray, in a rapture of satisfaction, kissing her again, and then whirling her suddenly inside the door with a spasm of jealous fear lest some envious passer-by might have glanced a scornful eye at this sweet, simple tableau of reconciliation.

Meantime the Widow Vane, with her back turned on the beautiful rainbow arching the domestic heaven so lately rent by passionate thunders, still innocently wise and with a virtuous pucker to her mouth, was making rapid preparations to go out on the formal and imperative errand of publishing to the benighted region round about a freshly-discovered and unsuspected fact, with important bearing on the raw social science, so called, whatever that might be.

According to the canons, customs and established opinions of society, the Widow Vane should have been a maiden lady of uncertain age delegated to the guardianship of the interests of virtue and morality; but Joseph Vane, deceased, had violated and inverted the order of Providence by taking her to wife;

he had made all the amends in his power by restoring her to her primal state as speedily as might be. But the fact is, though greatly it grieves me to write it, Joseph living could not have controlled and held inactive this woman's propensity to meddle any more than Joseph dead; and, mad, wife and widow, her nature remained the same.

Fully armed and equipped, our amiable and public-spirited mistress half an hour later sailed down the street to communicate and counsel with her dear friend and fellow in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity, Mrs. Matilda Skinner. That discerning lady smiled at once a something sweet and savoury in the air, but long familiarity with her sister woman's peculiarities warned her to hold her curiosity in check until the propitious moment when the thrilling secret, having risen to the level of its bounds, should in a generous burst of confidence overflow and become mutual property of the common, sympathetic bosom of friendship.

So, for a time, the conversation played about the great unspoken mystery like harmless lightnings about an electrical conductor, and it was not until the widow rose to go that, as if with sudden recollection, she exclaimed, half sinking to her seat again:

"Oh! had you heard of the trouble between Mr. Gray and his wife regarding her intimacy with his partner?"

"What! George Duncan?" ejaculated Mrs. Matilda, throwing completely off her guard and out of her equilibrium by the shock of the inflowing current, the force of which she had not fully calculated.

The widow nodded her head grimly.

"One hears so many things," said the wary Skinner, sagaciously, recovering her self-possession, and resolved not to manifest surprise at anything. "But, of course, you, living so near the Grays, and being on such friendly terms with them, must know the truth of this thing." And she looked at her visitor expectantly.

But the Widow Vane was not to be caught in such webs. She put on an expression that spoke unutterable things, and looked significantly wise, but declaring, virtuously, that whatever she might know she was, she hoped, no tattler or newsmonger, she closed her mouth with the resolute snap of a knife that does not open easily to unskilled fingers.

The work was done, nevertheless, as she very well knew. Before the sun went down her suggestion of evil had taken positive and tangible form and had travelled the whole length of the town, bumping up viciously in the twilight at the vine-arched gateway of a modest cottage, withdrawn and hidden in clambering rose-trees from the street, and tapping insinuatingly at the door in the person of one of those smooth, suave, sweet, sympathetic, disinterested women who tell you disagreeable things because, my dear, you really ought to know.

A girl in a gray dress, with a rose in her bosom and masses of fair, light hair tossed back from her pale, pure, clear-cut face came in answer to the serpent summons, and with cool, calm courtesy conducted the solicitous visitor into the softly-lighted parlour, whose atmosphere of peace and repose vaguely disquieted the bosom laden with the momentous secret which it was solemnly urged, but scarce knew how, to unburden.

The few commonplaces of health, weather, etc., being disposed of, there was a brief, awkward pause, in which the kind, sympathizing friend cleared her throat, and, impelled by her irresistible sense of duty, drew her chair close to Miss Heath, and laying a hand affectionately upon her arm, proceeded to discharge the self-imposed office of disinterested friendship.

"My dear Clara," she whined, "it gives me to hurt your feelings in any way, but I have just heard something which concerns you very much, and, unpleasant as it is, I feel it my duty to tell you. We all know your interest in Mr. George Duncan—here the listener's violet eyes darkened and her pure face flushed—and we all know too how much reason he has given you to believe and trust in him as an honourable, upright and high-principled gentleman, but—"

The tender, dutiful and sympathetic friend paused and shook her head sadly, but seeing no sign of emotion in the studiously impassive countenance of her auditor, and receiving no encouragement to proceed, she finished up her communication with directness and energy, omitting the expressions of condolence and regret that she had planned.

"There is a current report which, from things I know, I am not disposed to doubt, that George is secretly very much devoted to his partner's wife, in fact, that he is on the most intimate terms with her, and that Gray is so enraged with jealousy and a sense of his wrongs, he has threatened an immediate separation."

The reporter stopped short for breath and with a look that said, "And what do you think of that?"



[A LITTLE PEACEMAKER.]

But Clara Heath's sweet, firm, reticent lips only parted to say, with perfect composure and cheerfulness:

"Thank you, Mrs. Smyth, for your kindly interest, I fully appreciate your good intentions in this matter, even if it may not concern me as much as you suppose."

And she very sweetly and unceremoniously turned the conversation into other channels.

"The sly, cool, cautious and deceptive jade," inwardly commented the chagrined and disappointed friend and sympathizer. "One can never judge from her manner whether she is touched or not, nor make sure from anything she says how matters stand with her."

And seeing somehow that she had failed of her object, even though she had punctually performed her errand, the conscientious visitor presently recalled other obligations, and with the plea of urgent duties, politely and coldly took her leave, attended to the door by the sweetest smiles and kindest wishes of her courteous and untroubled hostess.

Half way to the gate she encountered a good-looking young man hurrying up to the cottage with such lover-like eagerness and expectation that he would have passed her without recognition had she not halted to accost him.

"Ah, good evening, Mr. Duncan, I have the pleasure to inform you that Miss Clara is at home and waiting your appearance," she said, jocosely, in her wise, knowing way.

"Thank you," responded the gentleman, briefly; evidently annoyed by this gratuitous interest in his affairs, and too impulsive and impetuous to be affable when offended.

"Ah-h," aspirated the benevolent lady, as he disappeared under the falling shadow of the roses; "if I could but follow and mark, unseen, the reception that he meets with!"

She might have done so and been no wiser for all

that she saw. Clara's cool fingers pressed punctually the eager outstretched hand of the new-comer; and in her words of welcome, only a lover, ardent and impassioned as he, could have detected a change, and a chilliness silent and blighting as the frost of a moonlit October night. Never at any time demonstrative, the mere outward observer would not have appreciated the hidden, delicate, indescribable ways by which she satisfied her nearest and dearest ones of the strength and fervour of her affection; and no more could any who did not feel its cutting force perceive the subtle change in manner expressive of her disapproval or displeasure.

The fiery, eager, intense heart of the man, who had come with tender hope and longing, was chilled to the core; and yet, for the life of him, he could not have fixed on any reasonable ground for complaint, had he dared to utter one. There was no lack of friendliness, courtesy or cordiality on the lady's part; indeed she seemed making an extraordinary effort for the agreeable entertainment of her guest, but that inexpressible and delightful something in look and bearing, which had heretofore exalted him with the feeling that he held the first and highest place in her regards, was displaced by some impassable barrier of reserve, which shut him ignominiously out with the common world, and divested him suddenly of rights which he had fondly imagined, more, reverently believed, were his.

Desperate, yet not knowing how to bridge the wide chasm that had so mysteriously opened between him and his love, and fearing that if he stayed a moment longer he should break impetuously over the bounds of perfect propriety which her quiet manner imposed, the unhappy wooer brought to a precipitate close the visit to which he had looked forward through all the long, toilsome, tiresome day, and which he had thought to prolong through the whole, bright, brief, beautiful summer evening. As he rose to take his leave, his heart, with a thrill of hope, looked forward

to the possibilities of the next meeting; and recollecting a privilege which, after a quaint village custom, she had sometimes accorded him, he said—half-affirmatively—turning back from the door:

"You will permit me to attend you to church to-morrow, Clara?"

"To-morrow? Ah, to-morrow is the Sabbath, to be sure," she answered, catching her breath behind the evasion for her next words. "No, thank you, Mr. Duncan. I think I prefer to go to church alone."

The refusal was kindly enough, but very distinct and positive nevertheless; with no pleading of this excuse or that, after the fashion of other women.

"Well!" murmured the retiring lover, crushing his hat over his eyes as he strode down the walk. "Could mortal woman be more sweet and courteous and kind? Yet I feel as though she had sentenced me to be hung."

But he hastened to church next morning, in a fever of anxiety to discover if his impressions of the previous night had not been the illusions of a dis-temperamented fancy, which a touch of Clara's hand, a single glance of Clara's eye, would instantly dispel, restoring his brain to its normal, healthy action.

He was waiting in the vestibule when she came in, friendly and smiling as usual, and with hand just as freely and frankly extended, yet in its touch there was no special and thrilling message to him of love and good-will, and the quickly-averted eye passed him over at once to the promiscuous outside crowd of people, who had, to be sure, her good wishes and kind sympathies in the ups and downs of life, but who wore no crown and borne no sceptre in the sacred and beautiful kingdom of her affections.

It seemed to him she must hear his heart cry out after her, as she brushed past him and went to her accustomed place in the choir, whither he had been wont to follow her; but as on the preceding evening she had sung for him alone, without her usual flattering request for his deep-toned accompaniment—which drew her clear, soaring, bird-like notes back from their far, ethereal flights by some subtle, earthly attraction—so now it did not appear at all essential to her happiness, or a matter of the slightest interest to her in any way, that he should mingle his voice and soul with hers in the worship and service of the temple.

For a moment, in a conflict of feeling that the decorous crowd about him could not know, he stood irresolute in the aisle, then obeying a nod, half-inquiringly, half inviting, from Mrs. Grey, he slipped quietly into the warm, fragrant, sunnery atmosphere of her cozy, home-like pew, unconscious of the significant glances exchanged about the house by those who might, perhaps, as well have been thinking of him they had come to serve.

She was one of those winsome, appealing, demon-strating, adaptable women—Mrs. Alexander Grey—who oftener catch in the rebound the lacerated hearts of men who have fallen out of grace with finer, higher, nobler and more exalted natures, and the soft-dropping balm of her sympathy soothed and comforted his sorely-chafed and mortified spirit so unobtrusively, that he turned to her in a glow of gratitude; thinking, as he looked down into her warm, sunny face, how happy might be the man blest and, above all, satisfied with her love. And then his eyes went up to that other face—pure and sweet and calm and steadfast in its high place—and his soul went out on the wings of her clear, jubilant, heaven-soaring voice; but, with a swift sting of pain and answering throb of resentment, he brought himself back again to the consolations of his immediate surroundings, and diligently sought out the hymns for his genial friend at his side, and fraternally sang and made his responses from the same golden-clasped book, which he gallantly held.

And at the conclusion of service, the aim and drift of which he had scarcely realized, he accepted Mrs. Grey's cordial invitation to go home with her to dinner; and, without a backward glance of the fair saint coming down from the singers' gallery, he attended her out of the house and walked with her up street; careless, in fact never so much as thinking of the wagging tongues and smirking smiles and significantly-tipped heads of the gossiping procession behind him.

Alexander Grey, stepping out of his office next day, was joined by a jovial fellow of his set, who, tapping him familiarly on the shoulder, saluted him in this wise:

"See here, my friend, I warn you to be a little more punctual hereafter in your attendance on the ceremonies of the sanctuary, and to keep a stricter eye on that good-looking wife of yours."

"How's that, Giles?" he questioned, a little nettled under his smiling exterior.

"Why," was the jesting response, "don't you see? Your absence exposes us susceptible bachelors to temptations unsuited to the season and unbecom- ing to the place. They proved too much for



Duncan yesterday; and he paid such marked attentions to the lovely Mrs. Grey as to quite divert the reflections of the heavenly-minded worshippers around about from their proper and legitimate channel."

"There, that will do, if you please. There are some things a man doesn't like to just about. My wife knows what attentions it is becoming in her to receive."

And the loyal husband abruptly changed the subject of conversation. But he was secretly annoyed and irritated by his friend's idle words, and revolving them in his thought while he talked of other things, he determined to mention the matter to his wife when he got home, and to caution her against any thoughtless action which the most evil-minded could misconstrue. He meant to do it in the kindest and tenderest way, of course; but it so happened that a succession of small business and domestic exasperations had ruffled his temper before an opportunity occurred to broach the subject, and this was the way in which he opened his gentle reproof:

"I wish you would exercise a little more discretion, Mrs. Grey, when you are out, in regard to your acceptance of the attentions of young gentlemen."

"Sir! what do you mean?" cried the little wife, in a heat, starting from her chair with a look and gesture worthy of a tragedy queen.

"Why, the whole town is talking about your flirtation with Duncan on Sunday at church," explained the injured husband, feeling that he must set the extraordinary fire he had kindled on a broad and enduring basis if he would save himself from being scorched and consumed by the angry blaze.

"It is false! You ought to be ashamed to come home to me with such a story! How dare you, sir? How dare you?"

And overcome with a sense of the outrageous insult she had received, the excited lady burst into a hysterical fit of weeping, and whirled herself indignantly out of the room, as if she could not bear the presence of such a monster of injustice and cruelty.

Mr. Grey felt exceedingly uncomfortable. He would like to have got up and ran after her with a conciliating, "There, there, my dear, I didn't mean any wrong, you know;" but his dignity would not suffer him, and so he sat still, biting his moustache, and looking very red and greatly discomfited.

They were a hot-headed and impulsive pair, and these fiery whirlwinds of passion and delugings of water were not infrequent, but they were always succeeded by soft, sighing zephyrs of forgiveness, tender concussions of lips and dazzling bursts of warm, genial heart-sunshine, and were, on the whole, rather salutary and agreeable in their purifying effects.

But it was not the gentleman's habit to descend from the mount of thunder until wooed by the sobbing breaths of pleading and penitent love; and as the indignant spouse did not return to be soothed and satisfied and comforted, and as it was incompatible with the principles and repugnant to the instincts of the masculine mind to go after her, the worthy attorney sat on, perplexed and uncertain what to do, till worn out with waiting, chafing with impatience, and beginning to feel wrath and wronged again, he jumped up, clapped on his hat, and with a glance of retaliation up the dim, unlighted staircase as he passed, he bolted out of his own inhospitable house into the cool night air and under the serene stars that smiled softly down and sailed smoothly on over his bitter rage.

The door had scarcely ceased to vibrate from the violent slam he had given it as he went out, when George Duncan, in his bold, frank way, walked up to it and rang for admittance. The warm, sunny little woman within (as he believed) had bound up so kindly and delicately the wounds of love from which he was suffering, that he felt drawn to come to her again, and he thought perhaps he would confide to her the whole story of his trouble—to him so blind and mysterious—and ask the direction of her finer perceptions in a matter where his own judgment was utterly confused and confounded.

But when she came into his presence he saw that her eyes were red and swollen with recent and violent rains, that her heart was evidently surcharged with some secret grief and perplexity which rendered her manner unnaturally timid and constrained; and thinking these were unmistakable tokens of conjugal storms which it would not be wise to notice, he exerted himself to entertain and divert her mind from unpleasant reflections with such success that when, late in the evening, he rose to go, he saw, with smiling self-satisfaction, a bright, piquant, animated, fascinating woman in place of the agitated, downcast, manifestly miserable one who had received him with an embarrassment painful and puzzling, if he had not set it down at once as among the incomprehensible things of feminine nature which he never hoped to understand.

As he ran down the steps, he met coming up the master of the house, who, freshly incensed by farther mysterious hints received in the town, gave him as wide a berth as the way would admit, and deigned no response to his friendly and familiar salutation.

Odd again; but it was beginning to seem to him that all his friends were slightly demented.

"So you receive your new favourite in my absence, it appears?" sneered the newly-outraged husband, in a still heat of passion, facing the bright-smiling wife at the parlour door.

"Yes, when you go off in a rage and leave me to do so," retorted Mrs. Grey, in a dangerous state of defiance.

"You need never imagine that I shall descend to the degrading office of watching your movements," said the gentleman, with the lofty dignity of a superior nature.

"You can act your own pleasure as regards that. It's of no consequence to me, I assure you," returned madam, with an exasperating show of indifference. And taking her night-lamp, she swept away to her room with the majesty of an offended queen, leaving her again discomfited lord to follow or not, as he chose. Of course he chose not, and spent the night in solitary brooding over his marital wrongs.

And the next day he found vent for his excited feelings in a violent quarrel with his partner concerning some trifling matter of business, and, burning with a mutual sense of insult and injustice, which neither in that hot moment of passion could forgive, they dissolved, without farther consideration, their hitherto pleasant and prosperous connection as a legal firm.

Returning home just at nightfall, angry, grieved, wounded, desperate, and ready, on the slightest provocation, to rupture, with the same haste and hotness, his domestic as well as his business partnership, he was stopped short in his headlong strides by an insinuating hand reached out warmly to him over the Widow Vane's shaded gate.

"My dear Mr. Grey, how like a ghost of yourself you are looking," spoke the friendly widow herself, leaning over the gate, with the tender sympathy that women have for the masculine sufferer in conjugal differences. "I'm afraid you are letting this thing wear on you too much, my friend."

Mr. Grey turned on her a swift glance of apprehension, and a wild suspicion darted like lightning through his brain that she, living in such a close proximity, might have gathered more than he himself suspected of his wife's infidelity and his friend's peridy. He opened his lips once, as if he would have questioned, but native manliness restrained him from seeking information in such clandestine ways, and then—great Heaven!—what more could he desire to know?

"If there is anything in the world I can do for Mr. Grey!" aspirated the widow, clasping her fair hands, and lifting her eyes with such a touching and mingled expression of sorrow, sympathy, respect and benevolent desire.

"You are very kind, Mrs. Vane," said the object of her solicitude, "but this is a matter which—excuse me—I cannot talk about."

"Ah, I know," cooed the widow, "so delicate and generous as you are in consideration of—one who should appreciate you better. I never saw anything like it. But you need not fear to confide in me. I have understood all about this affair ever since that morning when, running across the way for a friendly chat, I inadvertently overheard you reproving Mrs. Grey for her unfaithfulness."

"What morning was that, Mrs. Vane?" asked the gentleman, seeming unable to recall the circumstance.

"Why, the next after our picnic, if you remember," said she. "I know I was just tripping in to talk over the affair when I was startled and quite set back by the sound of your voices in hot dispute, and though I hurried away as fast as my feet would carry me, I couldn't help hearing you tell Mrs. Grey in honest, manly words that if she loved any one else she should never have married you, and that you couldn't stand the disgrace of this connection of hers with George Duncan."

"The deuce!" ejaculated Mr. Grey, staring at the lady in blank astonishment. "Why madam," he went on, when he could get his breath, "you misunderstood the trouble altogether. My wife was wanting new parlour carpets, mirrors or some ginecrackery or other, that it seemed to me we didn't need just at present, and as we were neither of us in the most amiable mood that morning, we ran into high words, which sounded a great deal more dreadful than we thought or felt, no doubt. I told her, like a savage brute, that I couldn't afford such extravagancies, that if she loved me she must be content with the fortunes of a man whom she knew to be poor when she married him—that it was a disgrace to go beyond our means, and that I was already under obligations to George

Duncan for loans and could stand the burden of no more, and so forth and so on. By Jove! you grievously mistook the subject of our little disagreement, Mrs. Vane."

And Mrs. Vane, under the stern eyes suddenly let down upon her, remembered, what she had forgotten, that her imagination had supplied the blanks in the broken conversation she had overheard and that she had reported it in this improved and amended form until the original facts of the case had quite escaped her.

A faint blush of shame dyed her innocent, benign face, but she was saved the mortification of an explanation or apology, for Mr. Grey, suddenly overpowered with recollection of the bewilderingly sweet reconciliation which had followed close upon the almost-forgotten quarrel the widow had called up, was hastening on towards his home as if drawn by a powerful magnet, yet with a curious feeling that his feet were somehow caught in an invisible, perplexing net from which he knew not how to set himself free.

Behind him, unsuspected, the watchful spider sat in the centre of her cunning web and winked and blinked with satisfaction at the frantic struggles and buzzing excitement of her stupid and blundering victims.

As the troubled man entered the door in a maze of doubt, wonder and anxiety, his little daughter came running towards him, putting up her hands with touching appeal to the paternal heart. He stooped down and took the dainty darling in his arms, straining her passionately to his breast with a longing for sympathy and understanding, which the child vaguely felt but could not comprehend.

"Come to mamma, papa—come," she said, tugging at him with her small arms. "Mamma cry—cry—come, papa."

But papa held back with frowning brow, until Pet, whose young spirit was soured and darkened by the household shadow, put up her quivering coral lip with threatenings of another outbreak of the storm which had evidently lulled at his coming.

"Come to mamma," she persisted, and he obeyed the beck of her imperious little hand, finding mamma with her face buried in the cushions of a lounge upon which she had thrown herself in utter abandon, sobbing bitterly.

"Tate mamma, too," commanded the wise little elf, pushing away from herself one of his clasping arms.

His heart yearned to take her, but pride and dignity were yet unconquered, though subdued, and he merely bent and stroked her hair with tender, lingering touch.

She started up at the well-known caress and reached out her hand with that grieved, penitent air which he never could resist. Down he sat upon the sofa beside her, and forgetting how injured and indignant he was, drew her close to his heart with Pet, who, laughing gleefully, essayed to clasp them both in her tiny, reaching arms.

"Oh, Aleck, dear, your suspicion has almost killed me," murmured the nestling wife, swaying between the outgoing cloud and the inbreaking sun.

"And don't you think I have suffered too?" he plaintively responded.

"Ah, but it was all so needless," she said, quickly lifting her head and looking frankly into his eyes. "It was such absolute nonsense, Aleck."

He felt that it was. He could not, at that moment, find any tangible basis for the misery which had certainly seemed real enough a little while before; and yet there were things that he did not understand, and could not explain away; and thinking of them confusedly, he wisely kept silent, and let the little woman ease her burdened mind and heart.

"Why, don't you know," she went on, "that you took just the right course to drive me on to the very evil of which you so recklessly accused me? If George Duncan had been acting the part that you assumed I'm sure I don't know as I should have repulsed him; for when my brain gets in this whirl of angry resentment, I'm likely to do all sorts of rash, imprudent things."

He knew that she was. His conscience reproved him strongly for thrusting his impulsive, wayward, and hot-tempered darling into the very jaws of temptation—he who had promised solemnly to cherish and protect. But he would accept no apologies for George Duncan; the man was a villain, he would not doubt; and the more his heart warmed towards his wife, the more bitter and unforgiving he grew in judgment of the friend with whom he had quarrelled, on pretences so shallow that he must needs justify himself to his own conscience by the assumption of other grounds.

Meantime, that gentleman himself was getting a little light on the perplexing affair, which he had vainly striven to unravel; growing more dazed, exasperated and indignant with every effort.

"Don't you see, Duncan, my boy," said an ad-

quaintance, breaking in upon his vexed thoughts, "don't you see that there is something behind this trumped-up excuse of Gray's for a dissolution of your interests? Why, with the obligation he is under to you, it is something vital and close to his heart, you may be sure, that has driven him to a quarrel so evidently detrimental to himself from a financial point of view."

"I see that clearly enough, if I chose to push my own advantage—which I don't," Duncan returned. "But what that vital something may be, which you suggest, I cannot, for the life of me, conjecture."

"Why," explained the wise instructor, "it is as plain as your Roman nose—the man is absurdly and insanely jealous."

"Jealous!" echoed the other, with unfeigned astonishment, "of whom? of what? pray tell me!"

"Of yourself—of your admiration of his pretty wife—my unconscious brother."

"By my faith, I was not aware of any undue admiration of that lady," responded Duncan, with heightened colour.

"There is a current rumour to that effect nevertheless," said the smiling friend, "and really, I thought your devotion to Mrs. Gray on Sunday rather justified it."

The young man started up with a swift, hot ejaculation, a sudden light breaking in on the darkness and mystery which had enveloped not only this affair but another more perplexing.

With his impetuous nature, to perceive was to act; and with only a breathless, "Excuse me," to his friend, he rushed out, settling his hat as he cleared the steps, and setting his face straight in the direction of Heath Cottage. There could be no doubt but Clara had heard this absurd story, and therein, he saw at a glance, must lie the explanation of her singular change towards him.

Admitted to the dear, familiar parlour, whose peaceful air thrilled him through and through with tender memories, he inquired without delay for Miss Clara, and was assured, by the young sister who came to receive him, that Miss Clara was too much engaged to see visitors, and must be excused.

"Tell her," said the determined man, "that it is not possible for me to excuse her to-night, that I have come on an imperative errand, and that I will not leave the house until I have seen her, if I have to force an entrance in her room."

"The Grand Sultan! What a tyrant he will be," muttered the little girl, running away with the message, which brought Miss Clara with an angry sparkle in her eye, but stately and cold and scrupulously polite.

Mr. Duncan arose as she entered, and standing, opened at once, and without preliminaries, the business on which he had come.

"I hear, Clara, that I am accused of coveting my neighbour's wife."

"Indeed!" she responded, lifting her eyebrows as though to say, "Does this possibly concern me?"

"Do you find this charge against me?" he asked, with a look that demanded an honest and unqualified reply.

"I—charge you with nothing," was the evasive and equivocal answer.

"I am assured that there is a current report to the effect that I cherish an improper regard for my friend, Mrs. Gray," he said, more directly. "Have you heard as much?"

"I have," was the curt response.

"Allow me to ask, did you credit it?"

Miss Clara flushed, and cast down her eyes in unusual embarrassment and confusion of manner. It seemed hard at that moment to confess to such folly, though there was no denying that it had influenced her action.

"Your behaviour last Sunday, I thought, gave countenance to the report," she said, with some bitterness, fencing with the issue.

It was Duncan's turn to flush and gnaw his lips with mortification and chagrin. This was the second time within half an hour that he had been taunted with an indiscretion that he could not excuse, and yet which he knew to be without any evil design at all.

"You forget," he said, with a hot sense of injustice, "that you condemned me for some cause before I gave countenance to such reports. And you know very well, Clara, that it was your previous cold, cutting, unexplained treatment of me which drove me to an action—of which I am wholly ashamed—though I must maintain that it was wrong only in the motives falsely imputed to me. I do not ask you to excuse my weakness; but I do feel as if I had merited more confidence than you have shown me; and that I had a right to know of what crime I was suspected before you passed your silent sentence of excommunication upon me. Nor will I ask you now to have faith in my truth, honour and fidelity against the voice of idle report to which you

have pleased to listen; but if you will come with me to the lady, who no doubt has suffered equally from this foul-mouthed scandal, I think she will be able to convince you that it is utterly without foundation, however unwisely we may have built upon it."

Clara Heath's fair face had undergone a multitude of changes during this plain, pointed speech, but its final expression was one of humility and contrition, infinitely sweet and touching to the heart of its one observer. The candour, honour, purity and manliness of her lover were so clearly manifest to her spirit, while he stood and talked before her, that her head drooped with shame that she had yielded to the base temptations of doubt, and wounded the loyal soul that had never wavered a hair's-breadth; she was certain, from his avowed and loving allegiance. Like Mr. Gray, at the moment, she was puzzled to find the ground on which the tormenting suspicions of yesterday had been based; but, being a woman, it was the most easy, natural, graceful and happy thing in the world to confess her fault and plead forgiveness.

Advancing towards Duncan with outstretched hands, she said, with charming candour and meekness, and with a look of implicit trust:

"I need nothing but your word to convince me that you are infinitely better and nobler and truer than I in this matter; and if you can pardon those unworthy doubts of mine, and take me back into your love, it is all that I can ask—more than I need expect."

But the generous-hearted lover had no more reproaches to utter; and before she was half through with her faltering speech he had her in his arms, asserting her of his entire forgiveness, of his complete satisfaction, of his perfect felicity; and for both of them, that blessed hour, was fulfilled the prophecy of a new heaven and a new earth.

And so the spider's web was broken by the straggling of its ensnared victims, though remnants of it still clung perplexingly about them; retarding, for some time, a return to the old, friendly relations of the gentlemen; neither of whom could approach the other with explanations of the delicate reasons underlying their disaffection.

There was, in fact, a sense of shame and wrong on all sides; for, with the propensity of human nature to fall into the evils of which it is suspected, and to react upon and against supposed injuries, each had really and actually diverged from the strict rule of right, and offended against the laws of inner peace and harmony.

Ah, if love were more tender, trustful and forbearing with its own—if life were too sacred to be broken on the fiery wheel of passion, too precious to be torn in tatters by petty conflicts—if souls were too strong and earnest and brave and true and high in aim and action, for the darting tongues of malice and mischief to reach and sower; these people might have escaped this foolish snaring and this weak sinning, and this story need not have been told, with moral tacked on at the last, as though 'twere an ancient fable instead of an everyday truth.

A. L. M.

## FACETIE.

It is generally believed that "you cannot get blood out of a stone." How, then, can we account for the fact that so many marbles are full of veins?

A YOUNG man charged with being lazy was asked if he took it from his father. "I think not," was the reply; "father's got all the laziness he ever had."

THE mother of an unmanageable Irish boy, living in Portland, thus excuses him to the police: "Sure, Patsey isn't a bad boy at all, but he is troubled with a roach of mind to the brain!"

HAUNTED HOUSES.—Houses that keep a half-dozen good-looking servant girls. The spirits manifest their presence after midnight, by certain muffled raps on the kitchen door. To exorcise them, chain a dog near the area gate.

It is now discovered that the account of a "balloon" being found in a tree in North Africa, and supposed to have travelled southward from France during the Franco-German war, is founded on a typographical error. The word should have been printed "balloon."

A YOUNG man propounds this conundrum: "What does a man mean when on the day of his wedding he says to his bride, 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow,' knowing that he has not got any, and if he had, she must wait till his death, and then get only one-third or one-half?"

"My son," said a dotting father, who was about taking his son into business, "what shall be the style of the new firm?" "Well, governor," said the one-and-twenty youth, looking up into the heavens for an answer, "I don't know, but suppose we have it John H. Samphill and Father." The old gentle-

man was struck by the originality of the idea, but could not adopt it.

"MAY it please your honour," exclaimed a jurymen, "I am deaf in one ear." "Then you may be excused, as it is necessary for a juror to hear both sides," said the judge.

"But you really can have no serious reason to wish to be parted from your wife," said a clergyman to a rustic. "Well, no, sir. I like my wife well enough, but, you see, she don't please mother," replied the rustic.

ADVICE TO SINGLE MEN.—If you don't want to fall in love, keep away from calico. You can no more play with girls without losing your heart than you can at roulette without losing your money. As Dobbs very justly observes, the heartstrings of a woman—like the tendrils of a vine—are always reaching out after more to cling to. The consequence is, that before you are going, you are gone, like a one-legged store at an auction.

MATRIMONIAL BIDDINGS.—They tell a funny incident which happened lately at an Aberdeen auction sale of damaged goods. A pair of blankets were up which seemed to take the eye of the crowd; the highest bid was five shillings from a lady who was determined to have them. But she had an unseen opponent who ran her up to a pound, and had the blankets knocked down to him. "Yours, Mr. Mac," said the smiling auctioneer. Whereupon the lady rose and exclaimed, "What! my husband?" and raising herself on tip-toe to get a sight of him, "why, you good-for-nothing man, you have been bidding against your own wife!"

A PARLIAMENTARY PROBLEM.—The professor of natural philosophy in a certain college recently gave the class a problem to think of during the night, and answer the next morning. The question was this:—

"If a hole were bored through the centre of the earth, from side to side, and a ball dropped into it, what motions would the ball pass through, and where would it come to a state of rest?" The next morning a student was called up to solve the problem. "What answer have you to give to the problem?" asked the professor. "Well, generally," replied the student, "I have not thought of the main question, but of a preliminary one: How are you going to get that hole bored through?"

BUYING A PAPER.

"I've got a penny left," said a loafer, "so I'll buy a paper with it."

"What paper will you buy?" said a friend, curious to learn the literary taste of his acquaintance.

"A paper of tobacco," replied the loafer.

MALAPROPOS.—At a populous manufacturing town there was an inhabitant who held a good position as fishmonger, and being partial to theatricals, was very kind, and gave assistance to the manager of the theatre. Being anxious to make his debut, it was at last arranged that he should play Polonius for the manager's benefit, the gentleman himself playing Hamlet. The house was crammed, and the play proceeded until it came to the lines, "Do you know me, my lord?" "Excellent well, you are a fishmonger!" when the maternal parent of Polonius (being in front, thinking the line was a personal insult to his son) rose and said: "Well, sir, if he is a fishmonger, he has been very kind to you, and you've no right to expose him in public."

THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR.

"Brother Smith, what does this mean?"

"What does what mean?"

"Bringing a nigger to this church."

"The pew is my own."

"Your own? Is that any reason why you should insult the congregation?"

"But he is intelligent and well educated."

"Who cares for that? He is a nigger."

"But he is a friend of mine."

"What of that? Must you therefore insult the whole congregation?"

"But he is a Christian and belongs to the same denomination."

"What do I care for that? Let him go and worship with his fellow niggers."

"But he is worth five million dollars," said the merchant.

"Worth what?"

"Five million dollars."

"Worth five million dollars? Jerusalem! Brother Smith, introduce me."

MUSICAL ENTHUSIASM.—A capital story comes from Vienna apropos of Liszt's recent performances in that city. It is said that the great pianist found himself recently in the company of a number of ladies, who begged him in hyperbolic terms to procure for them "the ecstasies, the artistic raptures, which his magnificent talent inevitably produces." He obligingly seated himself at the piano and played. When he had finished some of his admirers had fainted. "Well," said Liszt, "I played wrong notes all through, intentionally; so



badly, indeed, that I should have been turned out of doors at any elementary school of music!" List does not, perhaps, reckon that they faltered from recognising the awful fact of the bad playing of the maestro.

AN unsuccessful lover was asked by what means he lost his divinity. "Alas!" cried he, "I flattered her until she got too proud to speak to me."

A BARBER desired a groggy customer of his, one Sunday morning, whose breath smelled strong of alcohol, to keep his mouth shut, or the establishment might get indicted for selling rum on Sunday.

Mrs. GRUMMY wonders that so many witnesses will submit to be cross-questioned. She declared that if the lawyer questioned her in a cross manner, she wouldn't answer a word.

"It is difficult to 'trip it on the light fantastic toe,' nowadays," said Bridget. "Why so," asked Flidger. "Because all the light fantastic tow is now made into chignons," replied Bridget.

#### A NICE QUESTION OF TASTE.

Jeweller: "What kind of a chain would you like?" Young Man: "Well, I don't know, hardly. What kind of a chain would you think I ought to have; that is, what style would you think would be the most becoming for a young man that carries groceries to some of the best families in town?"

#### HOW MR. SLEDGE GOT PUNISHED.

Joe Muddle was a blacksmith's apprentice. His master, Simon Sledge, had, or professed to have, very just and proper views of the privileges of young men in his condition, and consequently never allowed him to go to the theatre or be out after eight o'clock.

To Joe this was an "iron ordinance," and having imbibed some taste for theatrical entertainments, he was particularly aggrieved at the offending restriction. Two or three times he had ventured to transgress, and every time found the door closed and locked upon him, so that he was obliged to get in at the window.

His master found it out too, and gave him sundry very severe lectures on the wickedness of theatres in general, and the depravity in particular which tempted young men to attend them.

One night, when Joe had quietly placed himself in a corner of the pit, prepared to indulge to the full in the forbidden joy, he happened to cast his eyes round the first tier of boxes, and was astounded to discover that his master was one of the audience.

Joe was angry. He was particularly hard upon hypocrisy just at that moment in his own mind, and resolved to have vengeance for the deprivation to which his master's hypocrisy had doomed him. After the play, Joe followed him home, and saw that he had so far sacrificed his dignity to the principle of closing the door at nine o'clock, as to get in at the window.

Joe's plans were formed for the next occasion, if such should occur. About this time the city was infested with burglars, and the apprentice received special orders one evening to sleep with one eye open.

"Going to the theatre, are you, old boy?" thought Joe, whose suspicions were roused by the instructions. "I have a stout stick in my room, sir," said he, in reply, "and I warrant you the house shall be safe."

Joe stationed himself in the sitting-room, big stick in hand, after the family had retired, and the door was locked. About the eleventh hour, he heard the window softly raised, and saw the bald head of his master projected into the room.

"Ah ha! my fine fellow, I have you now," exclaimed he, seizing the unfortunate Mr. Sledge by the collar, and labouring him soundly with the cudgel; "I have you now."

"Joe! Joe! don't you know me?" groaned the agonized master.

"Know you! no; of course I don't know thieves and burglars."

And with right good will he continued to punish the old hypocrite.

"Oh, Joe, Joe, you'll kill me."

"Don't care if I do; I'll teach you not to break into my master's house."

"For Heaven's sake, Joe, stay your hand! I am Mr. Sledge, your master!"

"You can't come that game on me."

And Joe did not spare him.

Mrs. Sledge, alarmed by the noise and confusion, now rushed into the room with a light, and for the first time Joe saw that he had been flogging his master.

"He has nearly killed me," groaned Mr. Sledge.

"You told me to keep the burglars out, sir," pleaded Joe, penitently. "How could I know it was you getting in at the window?"

Joe was forgiven, though with an ill grace; but after that the door was not locked till all the apprentices came in.

AN ESCAPE.—An undecided fellow courted a lady

for twenty-eight years and then married her. She turned out a perfect virago, but died in two years after the wedding. "Now, said he, in self-congratulation, 'see what I have escaped by a long courtship.'"

#### MUCH THE SAME.

"How much water do you put in your milk?" asked a man of a boy, who delivered on one of the milk walks.

"We don't put any water in it," replied the boy.

"What do you put in it, then?"

"Ice," said the candid youth.

REASONS FOR FEAR.—A little, four-year-old girl remarked to her mamma on going to bed, "I am not afraid of the dark." "No, of course you are not," replied her mamma, "for it can't hurt you." "But mamma, I was a little afraid once, when I went to the pantry in the dark to get a tart." "What were you afraid of?" asked her mamma. "I was afraid I couldn't find the tarts."

#### MAKING HIS MARK.

How can he make his mark  
Upon the roll of fame,  
And win a golden reputation?  
What poet, like a lark,  
Will soar to sing his name,  
And sound it through a generation?

Can he startling deed  
In lurid war perform,  
Making a marvellous sensation,  
Where armies fight and bleed,  
Or sailors in the storm  
Feel the old ocean's palpitation?

He makes his mark the best  
Who does what good he can  
Where'er may be his task or station;  
For every honest breast,  
And every manly man,  
Aids in his country's elevation.

The good Samaritan  
Who pitied the poor Jew,  
Without a thought of creed or nation,  
Honoured the race of man,  
Because his heart was true—  
Each mortal is a near relation.

And every mortal raised  
From "dust to Deity"  
Swells the glad chorus of salvation;  
And Providence is praised,  
And all humanity,  
Reaches a higher destination.

G. W. B.

#### GEMS.

COMMON sense is the growth of all countries.

NEVER attempt to strike the guilty, when, by the misdirected or too hasty blow, the innocent, the gallant, and the good may suffer. Never shake hands with a man if you are not really glad to see him.

THERE is no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

NEVER run extravagantly into debt, for it is the by-path which leads to moral destruction. Never quarrel without a sufficient cause; but if it be necessary that you do take up a quarrel, then see that quarrel firmly to an end. Never betray confidence of any kind, but more particularly that of woman.

SAY what we will, you may be sure that ambition is an error; its wear and tear of heart are never recompensed; it steals away the freshness of life; it deadens its vivid and social enjoyments; it shuts our souls to our own youth; and we are old ere we remember that we have made a fever and a labour of our best years.

NEVER abandon your hopes. Hope is often better than enjoyment. Hope is often the cause as well as the effect of youth. It is certainly a very pleasing and healthy passion. A hopeless person is deserted by himself; and he who forsakes himself is soon forsaken by friends and fortune.

OLDEST WORKED WOOD IN THE WORLD.—Probably the oldest timber in the world which has been subjected to the use of man is that which is found in the ancient temples of Egypt. It is found in connection with stonework which is known to be at least 4,000 years old. The wood, and the only wood used in the construction of their temples, is in the form of ties, holding the end of one stone to another in its upper surface. When two blocks were laid in place, then it appears that an excavation about an inch deep was

made in each block, into which an hour-glass-shaped tie was driven. It is, therefore, very difficult to force any stone from its position. The ties appear to have been the tamarisk, or shittim wood, of which the ark was constructed, a sacred tree in ancient Egypt, and now very rarely found in the valley of the Nile. These dove-tailed ties are just as sound now as on the day of their insertion. Although fuel is extremely scarce in that country, these bits of wood are not large enough to make it an object with the Arabs to heave off layer after layer of heavy stone for so small a prize. Had they been of bronze, half the old temples would have been destroyed ages ago, so precious would they have been for various purposes.

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

WHIP SYLLABUR.—One pint of cream, sifted white sugar to taste, half a tumbler of white wine, the grated rind and juice of a lemon; beat all to a froth.

NEW ITALIAN METHOD OF PRESERVING GRAPES.—It is said that grape clusters can be preserved until Easter as fresh and palatable as when cut by gathering them in small quantities on clear, dry days, removing any decayed berries, fuming them with benzine, and laying them (not in contact, however) between fine corn leaves, in drawers or trays, carefully closed against air and dust.

TO TAN SKINS.—The following method is recommended by a correspondent: Take equal parts salt, alum, and Glauber's salt, and half a part saltpetre; pulverize and mix. Handle the skins and rub the mixture in well three or four times a day, the more often the better. If there is not moisture enough in the skin to dissolve the salts, put a little water into the latter. We are assured that no moth will attack furs the felts of which have been thus prepared.

IMPROVED MODE OF CONDENSING MILK.—A simple and cheap method of condensing milk, devised by Gial of Innsbruck, consists in heating the milk in a boiler to from 150 degrees to 160 degrees, and then pumping it up through pipes, at the mouth of each of which is a perforated rose, like that of a watering-can. The milk thus returns in separate threads to the boiler, and in its passage the watery part is evaporated. This method is said to give concentrated milk quite as good as that by the ordinary processes, and with much less trouble and expense.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

KING COFFEE's umbrella and ivory stool are to be exhibited at the International.

THE Corporation of London have resolved to present a piece of plate of the value of £3,000, to the Duchess of Edinburgh.

It is stated that 250,000 samples of all the Portuguese wines will be exhibited in the vaults of the Albert Hall, in the Foreign Wines Department.

It has been observed that when the ash tree opens in leaf before the oak a wet summer usually follows; and when the oak tree opens its leaf the first it is prophetic of a dry summer.

A curious novelty has been introduced at Parisian dinner tables. It is to have on the back of the menu a short biographical notice of the persons who compose the company.

In the course of the autumn it is stated that the Grand Duke Alexis, the second brother of the Grand Duchess Marie, will arrive at Portsmouth in command of a Russian mau-of-war, named the Svetlander.

THE jewels of the Duchess of Edinburgh are something amazing. She has a diamond breast-plate worth many fortunes, and the day before she left St. Petersburg a bracelet was given to her worth 24,000*l*.

EARL GROSSENER, eldest son of the Duke of Westminster, is at present travelling in Egypt. His lordship attained his majority on the 28th ultimo, and it is announced that festivities in honour of the event will take place at Easton Hall in August next.

THE CZAR has, it is believed, definitely expressed his desire to be present at the Derby, but, if he should not arrive in time, he will attend Ascot instead. Some of the State apartments at Windsor as well as Buckingham Palace, will be placed at his Imperial Majesty's disposal, and a grand review in Windsor Park in his honour is also spoken of.

THE will of the late Madame Lenoir Jousseran assigns a sum of ten millions of francs for the creation of a vast hospital for the poor in the suburbs of Paris. The only condition appended to the gift is that the establishment shall bear the name of her husband. Her magnificent art collection, which is valued at nearly a million of francs, she leaves to the State.

## CONTENTS.

Page	Page
ADRIEN LEROT ... 553	A NEW METHOD OF DE-
SPRING IS COMING ... 556	TERMINING THE SUN'S
THE DUKE OF EDIN-	DISTANCE ... 570
BURGH'S MARRIAGE	"TAKE THE OTHER
TRAIT ... 558	"HAIR" ... 571
MAD DOG BITES ... 556	WHAT MRS. VANE
JOSEPHINE BEAUVIL-	HEARD ... 571
LIER ... 557	FACTS ... 574
MY MAID FENELLA ... 560	GEMS ... 575
ESTELLE ... 561	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES
MOUNT SINAI ... 563	MISCELLANEOUS ... 575
THE CLAN'S JOURNEY	
THE LOSS BY THE	
BANK OF ENGLAND	THE DOUBLED BONDAGE
FORGERIES ... 562	commenced in ... 561
THE BLENKARNE IN-	JOSEPHINE BEAUVIL-
HERITANCE ... 563	LIER, commenced in ... 567
THE DOUBLED BONDAGE	THE BLENKARNE IN-
RENDERING WOOD UN-	HERITANCE, commenced
INFLAMMABLE ... 563	in ... 568
LOVE AND FAITH ... 563	ADRIEN LEROT COM-
SCIENCE ... 569	menced in ... 570

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANNE AND JENNIE.—We do not reply to correspondents through the medium of the post-office.

ALBERT W.—Your second letter with its enclosure has been duly received.

FRANK.—Any announcement you may forward to us shall duly appear.

E. L. B.—If you make application to the Orthopedic Hospital you will very probably obtain the help you require for your child.

MIGNARDIE.—We are not acquainted with the book. The mixture appears to be intended for a person in a debilitated state of health.

M. B. A.—It is a well-known principle of law that all contracts for reward for procuring marriages (called marriage brokerage) are void.

E. G. C.—The lines bearing the title "Separation," are very well written and have sufficient interest to command the sympathy of every sensitive heart.

TOMMY T.—The information you send about yourself is insufficient. We are not therefore able to give you any hope that your desire can be gratified.

THOMAS G.—The lines do not appear to possess any interest beyond that which they will naturally have for the young lady to whom they are addressed.

J. B.—The handwriting is in great need of improvement and there are many words in the letter incorrectly spelt.

DOES HE LOVE ME?—L. Certainly not; a joke. 2. Against recognized etiquette, but quite pardonable. 3. A matter of taste. 4. Fair, but capable of improvement.

ANNEA.—The "Flying Jib" has, we are afraid, flown away. In other words his ship has sailed. Though you sing to him the melody "Fly not yet" never so sweetly, a sterner duty called and he obeyed.

FRANCE CHARLIE.—As a general rule you could not make any claim under the circumstances stated. Something would depend on the terms and custom of your hiring and upon the causes of your accident.

F. E. G.—If water stands in a tub, pail or barrel that is exposed to intense cold weather there is danger of the vessel freezing and bursting. If a stick be thrust down into the water it will prevent this, and no danger need be apprehended.

A COUSIN'S READER.—Commonly the arrangements connected with the cutting of the cake, etc., fall to the lot of the best man. Any little manual of marriage etiquette—and there are many—will supply you with full details of the correct mode of conducting the entire ceremony.

J.—We do not find the lady's name in the usual list; our memory does not enable us to give a more definite answer than that she first appeared in public quite twenty years ago and before music halls were so much in vogue as they are now.

SCOTLAND'S HILLS.—The pay in money is about eighteen pence a day. But this by no means represents the position of a private in the regiment referred to. He has in addition lodging, light, fuel, and the possibility of gaining good conduct badges and other advantages.

ESTHER A.—Looking for a man in New York would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. The New York Herald would be the likeliest paper. But personal search would certainly be requisite. Advertisements appear constantly in the papers, but in these cases we have every reason to believe they lead to very little.

JOHN S. P.—L. Any announcement will be duly inserted. 2. It depends altogether upon what is the cause. If arising from ill health very careful medical treatment would be required; if not, then try a preparation of glycerine and rose water, such as any chemist would readily supply you with.

MEMO.—The rule is that the application to the magistrate for an affiliation order should be made either before the birth of an illegitimate child or at any time within twelve months afterwards; but if the father has within the twelve months paid money for the child's maintenance such application may be made at any subsequent period without limitation in regard to time.

MAY E.—Some sort of medicine taken judiciously as to time and quantity might perhaps alleviate the inconveniences of which you complain; no one who has not the opportunity of seeing the irritation could prescribe more definitely, for which reason we can only add, consult some respectable vendor of drugs who dispenses his commodities near your own home. You have sent us a very nicely written letter.

H. T. Y.—To insure perfect cleanliness of the teeth they should be brushed three times daily, and a toothpick should be used after each meal to remove any food lodged between the teeth, while a suitable powder should be used sufficiently often to keep them in good condition, even though it be twice daily. A very good rule to adopt and follow systematically would be to brush them thor-

roughly each morning. After each meal use toothpick, brush and soft water, and in the evening before retiring again use brush and water thoroughly. The best tooth-picks are those made from a quill properly shaped, so as to dislodge the food from between the teeth. Choose a brush with the bristles pointed, and of different lengths. A good brush is really cheapest in the end and more efficient than the cheap and often worthless substitutes. Brush the teeth lengthwise as well as crosswise, so as to remove any particles of food in the interstices.

GEORGINA KATHERINE.—1. We presume that you refer not to the university examinations but to the local ones. Address, in this case, to the Delegates (Oxford Local Examination Scheme) Oxford, and similarly for Cambridge. 2. The subjects are much the same, requiring however different qualifications in the junior and in the senior candidates. 3. The handwriting is tolerably good; it abounds rather unduly in loops and curves. Look at some good copy-slips.

LENGOL.—A pharmaceutical novelty, introduced by Mr. W. T. Cooper, of 26, Oxford Street, has really something of the character of a surprise. A dry effervescent medicated lozenge is a form of preparation which has obviously much to recommend it. It is very convenient to be able to carry an effervescent draught in our waistcoat pocket, and to have in this portable, solid form all the advantages of a mode of administering medicines which heretofore required an apparatus of a tumbler and what is called a bottle.

EVA.—The use of a little chloride of lime and warm water imparts a delicate whiteness to the skin; but it should be only occasionally used; and should be well washed off with a little warm water to remove its odour. Glycerine employed in the same manner renders the skin soft, white and supple. The use of a little sand or powdered pumice stone with the soap will generally remove the roughness of the skin frequently induced by exposure to cold. To check perspiration, however, would be extremely dangerous.

LEL.—The pillory was a scaffold for persons to stand on, to render them publicly infamous. This punishment was awarded against persons convicted of forgery, perjury, libelling, etc. In some cases the head was put through a hole, the hands through two others, the nose slit, the face braided with one or more letters, and one or both ears were cut off. It was abolished as a punishment except for perjury in 1815, and was totally abolished in 1837. The last who suffered at the Old Bailey was Peter Bosny for perjury, June 24th, 1830.

## WHEN I MEAN TO MARRY.

When do I mean to marry?—Well,  
"Tis idle to dispute with fate;  
But if you choose to hear me tell,  
Fray listen, while I fix the date:

When daughters haste, with eager feet,  
A mother's daily toil to share;  
Can make the pudding which they eat,  
And mend the stockings which they wear;

When gentle ladies, who have got  
The offer of a lover's hand,  
Consent to share his "earthly lot,"  
And do not mean his lot of land;

When wives, in short, shall freely give  
Their hearts and hands to aid their spouses,  
And live as they were wont to live  
Within their sires' one-story houses.

Then, madam—if I'm not too old—  
Rejoiced to quit this lonely life,  
I'll brush my beaver, cease to scold,  
And look about me for a wife.

AN ARDENT ADMIRER.—1. The dyer could remedy it. Recent spots of grease, oil, or wax, on woollen cloth or silk may be removed with a little clean oil of turpentine or with benzole. Fruit and wine stains and old ink spots will be found to yield almost immediately to a very little powdered oxalic acid, which must be well rubbed upon the spot, previously moistened with boiling water, and kept hot over a basin filled with the same. 2. The handwriting is of a superior sort, but it abounds somewhat overmuch in curves and flourishes. With a little care it might soon become excellent.

FRANCE, eighteen, fair, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

ELIZABETH, nineteen, tall, fair, musical, and very affectionate. Respondent must be fair, and well educated.

RACHEL, twenty-five, tall, fair, would like to correspond with a dark man some years her senior. She is a dress-maker, and has a comfortable home of her own.

CLARA, twenty-two, 5ft. 10in., dark complexion, wishes to correspond with a pretty, affectionate girl of about nineteen, rather tall.

G. J., twenty, 6ft., dark, and considered good looking. Respondent must not be more than eighteen, must be fair, ladylike, and of a loving disposition.

MARY, twenty, dark hair, gray eyes, good tempered, and fond of home, desires to meet with a gentleman about twenty-five, tall and dark.

FRANK, twenty, medium height, loving and domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-five; a mechanic preferred.

ERNEST C., twenty-five, tall, handsome, fond of home, and has a small income. Respondent must be about the same age, affectionate, and fond of music and dancing.

ANNE F., a lady's-maid, twenty-one, fair, and good looking. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

R. J. C., eighteen, 6ft., dark, and considered good looking. Respondent must be about eighteen, well connected, and of a loving disposition.

LOVELY MINNA, fifteen, tall, rather fair, considered pretty, and large gray eyes, desires to correspond with a dark young gentleman about nineteen, and of good family.

PLAYFUL ANNIE, sixteen, medium height, dark-brown hair, black eyes, and considered handsome, desires to correspond with a young gentleman of light complexion, and fond of home; a draper preferred.

PLAYFUL CARIE, seventeen, medium height, dark-brown hair, blue eyes, and considered pretty. Respond-

ent must be of light complexion, and fond of home; a musician preferred.

LADY PEARL, eighteen, rather above the medium height, dark-blue eyes, curly golden hair, fair complexion, will have \$300 a year dating from her wedding day, desires to correspond with a tall gentleman of good family.

THEOPHIL JON, twenty-four, medium height, dark complexion, and a seaman in the Royal Navy, wishes to correspond with a pretty young lady about twenty-two, fair complexion, loving, and fond of home and children.

LOVING NELL, 5ft. 4in., fair complexion, brown eyes and hair, affectionate, fond of music, singing and dancing. Respondent must be twenty, dark, and fond of home and music.

CHARLES G., thirty, tall, dark, of respectable appearance and address, desires to correspond with a young lady under thirty, who is domesticated; good looks a secondary consideration.

W. H., a true blue, twenty-eight, 5ft. 8in., a seaman in the Royal Navy, fair complexion, blue eyes, light hair, and passable looking, wishes to correspond with a young woman who must be amiable, domesticated, and not older than twenty-five.

SAUCY BEN, twenty-five, dark-brown hair, black eyes, good looking, with an income of 250l. a year, wishes to correspond with an educated and accomplished young lady, whose age does not exceed twenty-one, one with a little income of her own preferred.

LOVING LOUISA, twenty, fair, auburn hair, considered good looking, and has an income of 150l. per annum, desires to correspond with a tall, dark young man about twenty-two, good looking, good tempered, and fond of home.

LOVING NELLIE, twenty, dark complexion, dark curly hair, blue eyes, and has an income of 130l. per annum, would like to correspond with a tall, dark young man, who must be good looking, about twenty-three, good tempered, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

WALTER W., twenty-three, 5ft. 10in., considered good looking, and fond of home, and children, desires to correspond with a young lady about twenty-one, pretty, loving, and fond of music.

FREDRICK, twenty-four, 5ft. 4in., dark complexion, curly hair, fond of music and home. Respondent must be about twenty, pretty, loving, and fond of home and music.

HARRIET, nineteen, medium height, dark-brown hair, hazel eyes, of an affectionate disposition, and fond of home and children. Respondent must be tall, fair, good looking, affectionate, fond of home, and one with a little money preferred.

CECELIA, nineteen, a blonde, blue eyes, golden hair, considered pretty, affectionate, and has an income of 100l. per annum, desires to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-two, dark, handsome, affectionate, and holding a good position.

ANNABEL and CLARA. "Annabel" twenty, fair complexion, golden hair, blue eyes, and well domesticated. "Clara" light-brown hair, blue eyes, and well domesticated, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen who are in business, and who are brothers or companions.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

FLORENCE is responded to by—"Aspiritus," twenty-two, 5ft. 8in., fair complexion, has slight moustache, is extremely loving and amiable, and possesses an income of 400l.

DOLPHIN by—"Mabel L.," she has a small income, and would make a loving wife.

ROBERT by—"A. F.," twenty, good tempered, and thinks she meets his description.

ORLANDO by—"Polly S.," between thirty and forty dark hair, loving, very domesticated, and a cook.

JOHN J. by—"M. H.," a Scotch girl, who thinks she quite suits him, she has musical tastes, and is considered a good singer.

ANNIE by—"Dick," twenty-three, good looking, can dance and sing, and will shortly have a lucrative business.

HELEN M. by—"X. Y. Z.," twenty-five, middle height dark, in a good position, kind, well connected, and well educated.

T. S. by—"Faithful," a widow, thirty-four, good looking, affectionate, and has an income of a hundred a year.

JESSIE by—"J. C. U.," twenty-five, good looking, fond, and would make a good husband to a loving wife; and by—"Charlie," twenty-five, dark, middle stature, kind, fond of home comforts, has a good ear for music, in a good position, and well connected.

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